

Hafa Adai!

FEMA to homeowners: Stay committed to the program. **PAGE 3**
DPS: Missing woman still on island. **PAGE 8**

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New bridge opens in Kagman

By IVA MAURIN
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REPORTER

A new bridge along Lalanghita Road in Kagman with a price tag of \$2.1 million was officially unveiled yesterday in a ribbon-cut-

ting ceremony and blessing, with a promise of more projects and road improvements in the days ahead.

The project, at \$2.1 million, is considered the heftiest appropriation for one See BRIDGE on Page 4

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, ninth from left, leads yesterday's ribbon-cutting ceremony that officially inaugurates the new bridge on Lalanghita Road, the latest in Precinct 5's Road Improvement Project.

IVA MAURIN

Mark Brown resigns

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Mark A. Brown resigned as interim chairman of Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC effective last Sunday, according to Commonwealth Casino Commission executive director Edward Deleon Guerrero yesterday.



Brown

» IPI confident it will finish project by 2021

His resignation, which comes on the heels of Phillip J. Tydingco's departure as IPI's chief legal counsel effective tomorrow, Friday, as well last month's Federal Bureau of Investiga-

tion's raids that included IPI's accounting office, puts into question the company's capability to finish its casino-resort project in Garapan.

IPI's majority shareholder, Ji Xiaobo, has assured Deleon Guerrero, though, that they can finish the casino-resort project on or before February 2021, which is the extended deadline given to the company by the Lottery Commission.

See BROWN on Page 4

Release of \$1.3M for teachers on hold

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

The release of \$1.3 million in cash incentives for public school teachers is currently

on hold because some Board of Education members want that money distributed to more people.

In a special board meeting yesterday, BOE members

met to discuss the motion to approve the release of \$1.3 million that the Retention Incentive Program recently acquired as monetary incentive for PSS teachers, teacher

aids, counselors, librarians, instructors, principals, and vice principals.

However, the board were deadlocked at 2-2 yesterday on whether the funds should be released. That means the See RELEASE on Page 4

'I got nothing to hide'

By IVA MAURIN
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REPORTER

Thus said Gov. Ralph DLG Torres in response to the Open Government Act request that the House of Representatives minority bloc sent to Finance Secretary David Atalig last Tuesday, where



Torres

2014, among others.

"All my documentation, anybody can get it, there is nothing to hide," Torres said.

"If they want to do an OG [Open Government] on it, go ahead. If they have questions on the expenditure, please feel free. I got nothing to hide."

At the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the third home repaired under the CNMI-Federal Emer- See HIDE on Page 4

INSIDE



BUSINESS

A construction company in the CNMI is venturing into the cargo business.

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NATION

Six people, including a police officer and three bystanders, were killed in a gunbattle.

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WORLD

Corruption allegations have long dogged Mexico's former security chief, Genaro García Luna.

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Local

Last day to enroll for govt health insurance this Friday

The Department of Finance announced that the last day for government employees to enroll open for the CNMI Government Group Health and Life Insurance is this Friday, Dec. 13, 2019, for coverage effective Jan. 1, 2020.

Supported by Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, the health insurance employee premium rates that were effective July 1, 2018, will remain for the 2020 renewal period.

According to Finance Secretary David DLG Atalig, the government continues to work with its health insurance provider to offer affordable health insurance for all government employees and retirees.

For active government employees, contributions per pay period will be \$77.68 for high coverage, \$23.86 for low coverage, and \$0.00 for basic. An employee and spouse or one dependent will pay \$159.22 for high coverage, \$48.50 for low coverage and \$0.00 for basic. An employee and their family will pay \$248.53 for high coverage, \$76.32 for low, \$0.00 for basic.

Government retirees will pay bi-weekly \$84.15 for high coverage, \$25.85 for low, \$0.00 for basic. Inclusion of retiree spouses or one dependent will cost \$173.49 for high, \$52.98 for low, and \$0.00 for basic. For retirees and their family, \$269.25 for

high coverage, \$82.69 for low, and \$0.00 for basic.

Pacifica Insurance, Underwriters Inc. general agent for Aetna Insurance located in Susupe at the Joeten Center, first floor, will be available to assist new and existing members. (PR)

'CW-1 worker can be awarded attorney fees even if he is represented by MLSC'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

the prevailing party was represented by an attorney employed by MLSC.

Camacho noted that the language used by both statutes to authorize the awarding of attorney's fees is similar.

According to court records, the six workers sued Edita Capilitan Cruz, the owner of a manpower services company on Saipan, for defrauding them of cash in exchange for promised CW-1 visa applications that she never filed.

After the court issued its default judgment, Lapeceros, through counsel Jane Mack of MLSC, requested attorney's fees.

Mack based the claim for attorney's fees on the section of the Alien and Immigrant Consumer Protection Act that allows prevailing plaintiffs to be awarded attorney's fees.

In Lapeceros' case, court records show that Cruz advertised her business as a manpower agency that would process paperwork for foreign workers who sought employment as CW-1 workers.

Cruz offered Lapeceros a CW-1 employment as a commercial cleaner for her business.

After Lapeceros began his employment, Cruz offered to hire Lapeceros' wife as a kitchen helper. Lapeceros paid Cruz \$950 to process his wife's papers for the kitchen helper position.

Cruz, however, did not submit CW-1 documents to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services for Lapeceros' wife.

In March 2019, Lapeceros sued Cruz for fraud and for violating the Alien and Immigrant Consumer Protection Act. On July 31, 2019, Camacho issued a default judgment against Cruz, finding evidence that Cruz's conduct violated the Act.

Camacho awarded Lapeceros \$10,735 in damages and costs.



Camacho



FEMA to homeowners: Stay committed to the program

Federal Emergency Management Agency regional administrator Robert Fenton, third from left, and Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, fourth from left, led the ribbon-cutting ceremony yesterday in Kagman to highlight the third home repaired under the CNMI-FEMA Permanent Home Construction Repair Program.

IVA MAURIN

By IVA MAURIN
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REPORTER

As the Federal Emergency Management Agency completes its third permanent construction repair in the CNMI, FEMA regional administrator Robert Fenton appeals to homeowners who participated to stay committed to the program.

"Recovery is never easy, but we are in this together," Fenton said, assuring the FEMA participants of the federal agency's commitment to helping CNMI homeowners rebuild more resilient homes that could withstand future storms.

FEMA assures that they are focused on doing the permanent housing construction repairs for 148 household participants, and housing construction for another 178 participants.

"Do not pass up this opportunity, stay committed to this because you are going to end up with a much more hardened, stronger structure than you ever had before, built by engineering firms to withstand the winds," Fenton said.

"If you look at this over a 30-year period, I guarantee you that we will see more storms in the future. And we'll see more devastating storms, unfortunately, that will hit the CNMI," he said.

Despite the challenges,

American Samoa to begin mass measles vaccination this Friday

PAGO PAGO, American Samoa (AP)—Health officials in the U.S. territory of American Samoa say they will begin mass measles vaccinations later this week.

At a meeting Sunday, officials said the vaccinations would be given for seven days starting Friday. There are nine confirmed cases of measles in the island territory.

American Samoa Health Department Epidemiologist Dr. Aifili John Tufa says five of the island's cases were in

which include getting materials to the islands and doing the design and engineering to make sure that the homes would survive the next storms, the FEMA project is moving forward with 30 more houses currently being repaired, and the first house that's due to be built by FEMA already scheduled to start work next week.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, who asked for this FEMA program, has nothing but gratitude for the work that FEMA has been doing for the CNMI.

"I can't stress how appreciative our community is, especially those homes that are being built by our volunteers and those construction companies and the effort that FEMA has worked on," Torres said. "We are blessed. Considering there's so much more natural disasters throughout the nation, but yet our priorities here are never given [short shrift]."

Yesterday, the Office of the Governor and FEMA held a ribbon-cutting ceremony in Kagman to highlight the third home repaired under the CNMI-FEMA Permanent Home Construction Repair Program.

The Permanent Housing Construction program is offered in insular areas outside the continental United States where alternative housing resources are unavailable or scarce, where repairs are neither feasible nor cost-effective.

people who had been traveling and the others were locally transmitted.

On Friday, American Samoa officially declared a measles outbreak, a move that closed public schools Monday and prohibits gatherings in parks.

In the neighboring independent nation of Samoa, more than 60 people have died, mostly children, from the measles and more than 4,000 were infected since the outbreak started in mid-October.

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CDA turns over 5 computers to Youth Affairs

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

With an eye toward developing youth entrepreneurs, the Commonwealth Development Authority turned over five refurbished computers yesterday to the CNMI Office of Youth Affairs.

The desktop computers were part of the 10 the autonomous government agency promised to donate to Youth Affairs back in August. The donation was in partnership with PC Merge Guam and Saipan, which did \$8,000 worth of upgrades and improvements on the computers free of charge.

"The CDA board of directors approved on Aug. 16, 2019, to donate 10 desktop computers to the Office of Youth Affairs. Mr. Ted Deleon Guerrero of PC Merge Guam and Saipan has not

only reconditioned the desktops with new hard drives and software but also offered to provide continued maintenance of the desktops," a statement from CDA executive director Manuel Sablan read.

He said CDA made the donation as an investment for the islands' future, knowing all too well that from the many handled by Youth Affairs would eventually spring future businessmen.

"...This additional resource would serve not just a tool for learning but also an opportunity for our youth to learn business entrepreneurship in the Commonwealth. Both the Commonwealth Development Authority and PC Merge Guam [and Saipan] recognize the growing importance of technology in our islands as well as the unlimited potential our youth possess," added Sablan.

CDA board members Ralph Demapan echoed Sablan.

"Our youth are our future entrepreneurs. This is just part of our community contribution to our young kids. I'm sure this is just the beginning. I think there are more contributions that will be done by CDA. Hopefully, as the kids grow they become businesspeople so we could create a local economy also and not just rely on foreign investment," he said.

Deleon Guerrero said that CDA initially only called for help to upgrade the units' outdated hard drive. "I said, 'Let me do it better! My team could refurbish it for you, but instead of just refurbishing the hard drive, I will put in a solid-state drive, add additional RAM, and upgrade the operating system and add [Microsoft] Office."

Deleon Guerrero said his

18-year-old son was able to refurbish all five computers in about three days after waiting for a month for parts to arrive. He will refurbish the remaining five units once the ordered RAM also arrive.

Deleon Guerrero also offered to conduct computer-building courses for Youth Affairs.

"Talked to [Youth Affairs acting special assistant Roy Ada] and [told him] I would like to offer computer-building courses to the youth ages 12-17 so someday they can maybe open their own shop and help out with the economy. We want to find young individuals who are gifted with technology and would like to mentor them more," he added.

Ada thanked the CDA board of directors as well as Deleon Guerrero of PC Merge "for these wonderful tools that our youth can uti-

lize to conduct their research and explore options that are available to them."

He also appreciated the willingness of PC Merge to go a step further.

In previous years the CNMI Scholarship Office donated computers to Youth Affairs, but due to the recent storm, most of their computers have been damaged.

BROWN

From Page 1

Deleon Guerrero said that, based on his conversation with Ji Xiaobo last Monday, IPI needs just a relatively "manageable amount" to complete the whole project.

In reference to Brown's resignation, Deleon Guerrero said he received Brown's email message last Sunday that he is resigning from his position as interim chairman of IPI CNMI.

He said Brown had indicated in his email that when he returned to IPI last year, he was merely acting as the interim chairman, similar to an adviser to the company, and was not necessarily its chief executive officer.

Deleon Guerrero said that Brown thanked the casino commission for the opportunity to have worked with them.

Deleon Guerrero said Brown also mentioned some other issues, but he did not elaborate. He noted, though, that Brown was not present at the casino commission's last two meetings, despite being notified about the meetings in advance.

He said it has been the position of the casino commission that Brown, as the highest officer of IPI, should be responsible for the ongoing construction project, for the marketing activities of IPI and for its financials, and they are thus very concerned about its ongoing projects.

He said if the CEO cannot do that, then the CCC would be forced to examine the casino key employee license processing procedures.

"As part of our casino regulatory requirements, whoever IPI hires to replace the CEO or the chief legal counsel, would [be] required [to] secure a casino key employee license from the commission. This is IPI's responsibility," Deleon Guerrero pointed out.

He said they are communicating now to see that IPI's new general counsel, Joey Patrick San Nicolas, and whoever they appoint for

"Only have a few for staff and our systems are out of date and practically obsolete. These are much needed tools for our kids, especially now that our numbers are increasing," said Ada, adding that the initiative to obtain the computers was first made during the time of former Youth Affairs special assistant Monique Sablan.

the new chairman or CEO must secure a casino key employee license from CCC. To get started, the commission can issue a short-term one-year provisional license, he added.

He said what they could do is require IPI to submit the application for the full two-year key employee license, which is very extensive.

"And we would proceed with our due diligence and, within that one-year period, when we complete our due diligence, we would then prepare all the necessary documentation to present to the commission for the full two-year license," Deleon Guerrero said.

After guiding IPI through many key phases in its casino project, Brown left the company in late 2017, reportedly to retire and "spend more time with his family" in the U.S. mainland.

He returned to IPI in October 2018, as the completion of the Garapan casino-resort project "enters its final phase."

Deleon Guerrero said that Ji informed him that they have identified the amount needed to complete the project. He declined to discuss the exact amount, aside from saying that IPI had sat down with their engineers and everybody on the ground and they went to make a complete assessment.

"And they came back and they told us how much they would need for personnel labor, how much they need for materials," he said.

Deleon Guerrero said a significant amount of materials are already on the island and in warehouses.

He said IPI is confident they would finish the entire project on or before February 2021.

Deleon Guerrero said they have been working with IPI to provide the CCC the financial documents that they require them to submit as part of the financial review.

"We are reviewing those now. And we will be discussing that with the commission at the Dec. 19 meeting," he said.

BRIDGE

From Page 1

precinct ever in the history of the Saipan and Northern Islands Delegation.

Speaking at yesterday's ribbon-cutting, Rep. Lorenzo I. Deleon Guerrero (R-Saipan), vice speaker of the 21st Legislature, said the project signifies the strong relationship among the members of the legislative leadership and the Torres administration.

"This...symbolizes the strong partnership between our administration and the Legislature," he said. "With-

out the strong bond between branches of government none of these projects would be reality."

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres echoed Deleon Guerrero's message of partnership, adding that it is important to advocate for the precinct's needs.

"We work together, we look at the priorities, and as the administration, it is important to advocate for Precinct 5's needs," Torres said. "So for the people of Precinct 5, today, you are seeing this kind of fruitful hard work for the people here and all the people in the CNMI."

The new bridge is the lat-

est of Precinct 5's Road Improvement Projects, through the Department of Public Works.

DPW Secretary James A. Ada reminded everyone that the work is not over, and that there are more projects to be done.

"I'd like to remind everyone again that the groundbreaking is not over. We still have Route 34 and Kannat Tabla," Ada said before adding that he loves Precinct 5, being a resident of it himself.

As the biggest village on Saipan, Precinct 5 has seen six recent road improvements, including the

construction of additional pavement on Pine Drive and Pepega Avenue and of the concrete swale at Chopak Drive, which was completed in January 2016, the Pine Drive Road and drainage improvement that was completed in November 2017, and the Tangantangan Road improvement, which was completed in April 2018.

This year, the projects include the Puteng Drive Road improvement that was completed in March, the Lalangha Avenue Road improvement completed in September, and the Lalanghita Road.

RELEASE

From Page 1

board will meet again this afternoon to discuss the motion and, according to BOE chair Janice Tenorio, she is determined to fight for the incentive for all CNMI teachers.

As originally envisioned, if the \$1.3 million is approved for distribution, it would go to 600 PSS teachers, teacher aids, instructors, 41 principals and vice principals, and etc.

Tenorio and BOE vice chair Herman Atalig voted yes on the motion to release the funds, saying they believe that the teachers deserve the in-

centive and it is also a means to encourage the retention of teachers.

"We are rooting for this program. [Teachers] deserve this. We also want to keep our teachers, especially with recovery still ongoing. This is also good for our students. It's better for them [the students] emotionally to have the same teachers. It's not good for them if we keep switching teachers," she said.

BOE members Marylou Ada and Andrew Orsini, however, voted no on the motion to release the funds because the incentive does not include the PSS leadership and support staff, like maintenance.

The absence of BOE Tiniyan representative Phillip Mendiola-Long caused the deadlock as his vote was the determining one.

Tenorio said that, although she sympathizes with the support staff and PSS leadership who are excluded from the incentive program, especially since austerity measures have yet to be lifted for PSS, providing incentives to the support staff and the PSS leadership would mean the additional need for \$483,000 in local funds that the CNMI currently doesn't have.

Tenorio believes that PSS teachers are not selfish and will share their benefit with

support staff who will not be receiving incentives through the program.

"At least over 600 teachers will be happy and they're not selfish. If they know that the support staff won't get an incentive, they will share their wealth," she said.

PSS federal programs officer Tim Thornburgh discovered the Retention Incentive Program under Project Restart.

Project Restart is a federal program that awards grants that can be used for school operations, recruitment of teachers, renewal of teachers, rewards, and performance incentives for teachers.

HIDE

From Page 1

gency Management Agency Permanent Home Construction Repair Program yesterday in Kagman, the governor reiterated that an investigation is

already in place and that there is nothing to hide.

"If there are specific questions that they want, they could go ahead and ask. Again, there is an investigation, there is nothing to hide there. But at the end of the day, I feel comfortable that I will be cleared,"

he added.

Following the House minority bloc's request Tuesday, the administration issued a statement that the documents were made available in response to an Open Government Act request.

Agents of the Federal Bu-

reau of Investigation executed a search warrant on Torres' office on Capital Hill, along with others in the CNMI, in early November, as part of an investigation into possible violations of federal laws.

The case is still under investigation.

The Marianas Visitors Authority and organizers of the Christmas in the Marianas celebration invite the public to the Christmas Parade of Lights on Saturday, Dec. 14, after sunset in Garapan.

The parade will begin at about 6pm at the Carolinian Affairs Office and head north on Beach Road to American Memorial Park, featuring floats adorned with Christmas lights. School marching units will also join the parade with Christmas costumes. Immediately following the parade, a Christmas costume catwalk contest will take place at Paseo de Marianas, followed by the announcement of winning schools for contests in Christmas Tree decorating, caroling, and holiday skits held over the last two Saturday evenings. Additional entertainment by Hopwood Middle School and Marianas High School will close out the evening.

The holiday celebration features live entertainment, food sales, arts and crafts, and more and is being held every Saturday throughout the month from 6pm to 10pm and is hosted by the Marianas Visitors Authority, PDM Promoters, Inc., Team PDI, and other travel partners.

The pedestrian mall in Saipan's main tourist district is illuminated nightly with the official Christmas tree and trees decorated by local schools. The school trees, decorated with recyclable material, will remain on display through New Year's.

Dec. 21 will feature a special night with Skymark Airlines, which launched regular direct flights from Tokyo to Saipan on Nov. 29, 2019. Roundtrip tickets on



Students of Marianas High School perform at Christmas in the Marianas on Dec. 7, 2019, at Paseo de Marianas. Festivities will continue on Dec. 14 with the Christmas Parade of Lights and other entertainment.



High school students of Agape Christian School perform at Christmas in the Marianas on Dec. 14, 2019, at Paseo de Marianas. MVA

Christmas Parade of Lights on Dec. 14



Students of Chacha Middle School perform at Christmas in the Marianas on Dec. 14, 2019, at Paseo de Marianas. The event is held every Saturday night in December, from 6pm to 10pm. MVA



Students of Saipan Southern High School's MY WAVE Club draw members of the audience into their performance at Christmas in the Marianas on Dec. 14, 2019, at Paseo de Marianas in Saipan. MVA



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FOR IMMEDIATE HIRING

COMPANY: IMPERIAL PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL (CNMI), LLC

JOB TITLE: Construction Carpenter

NUMBER OF OPENING: 350

OPENING DATE: December 09, 2019

WAGES/SALARY: \$15.48 to \$28.95 per hour / Overtime Rate: \$23.22 to \$43.42 per hour

EMPLOYMENT BASIS & DURATION
This job opportunity is for a temporary, full-time position beginning on January 31, 2020 and ending on January 30, 2021.

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JOB DUTIES

- Follow established safety rules and regulations and maintain a safe and clean environment
- study specifications in blueprints, sketches, or building plans to prepare project layout and determine dimensions and materials required
- measure and mark cutting lines on materials, using a ruler, pencil, chalk, and marking gauge
- shape or cut materials to specified measurements, using hand tools, machines, or power saws
- install structures or fixtures, such as windows, frames, floorings, trim, or hardware, using carpenters' hand or power tools
- verify truthiness of structure, using plumb bob and level
- select and order lumber or other required materials
- arrange for subcontractors to deal with special areas, such as heating or electrical wiring work
- maintain records, document actions, and present written progress reports
- build or repair cabinets, doors, frameworks, floors, or other wooden fixtures used in buildings, using woodworking machines, carpenters' hand tools, or power tools
- erect scaffolding or ladders for assembling or ladders for assembling structure above ground levels
- inspect ceiling or floor tile, wall coverings, siding, glass, or woodwork to detect broken or damaged structures
- assemble and fasten materials to make frameworks or props, using hand tools and wood screws, nails, dowel pins, or glue
- remove damaged or defective parts or sections of structures and repair or replace, using hand tools
- finish surfaces of woodwork or wallboard in houses or buildings, using paint, hand tools, or paneling
- apply shock-absorbing, sound-deadening, or decorative paneling to ceilings or walls
- cover subfloors with building paper to keep out moisture and lay hardwood, parquet, or wood-strip floor floors to mastic or asphalt base
- fill cracks or other defects in plaster or plasterboard and sand patch, using patching plaster, trowel, and sanding tool
- perform minor plumbing, welding or concrete mixing work
- prepare cost estimates for clients and employers
- construct forms or chutes for pouring concrete
- work with or remove hazardous material

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

High school diploma or above. 12 months of on-the-job experience as a Construction Carpenter is a minimum requirement for this position.

WORK HOURS

Employees hired under this announcement will work on full time employment thirty-five (35) hours per week. There are three rotating shifts per day. (A) Day Shift will be from 6:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. (B) Swing Shift will be from 2:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. (C) Night Shift will be from 10:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m. Employee hired under this announcement will be rotated through each of the three shifts

SINGLE WORKWEEK FOR PAY

The employer will use a single workweek as its standard for computing wages due.

FREQUENCY OF PAY

Workers will be paid on bi-weekly basis.

HOUSING & MEAL

The employer will provide optional housing at no cost per week, during the employment. The employees will be provided one (1) duty meal per day at no expense for the duration of the employment.

DEDUCTIONS

The employer will make all deductions from the employee's paycheck required by laws.

INBOUND/OUTBOUND TRANSPORTATION AND SUBSISTENCE

The Employer shall pay for all inbound transportation and subsistence from the place of recruitment to the place of work. Upon completion of the work contract, or where the worker is dismissed earlier, the employer will provide or pay for worker's reasonable costs of return transportation and subsistence back home or to the place the worker originally departed to work, except where the worker will not return due to subsequent employment with another employer or where the employer has appropriately reported a worker's voluntary abandonment of employment. Travel subsistence starts with the rate of \$12.46 per day up to a maximum of \$55.00 with receipts.

DAILY TRANSPORTATION

The employer will provide daily transportation at no charge to and from the worker's provided lodging for the duration of the employment.

FIRST WORK WEEK REIMBURSEMENT

Workers will be reimbursed in the first workweek for all visa, visa processing, border crossing, and other related fees, including those mandated by the government (except passport fees).

THREE-FOURTHS GUARANTEE

Workers will be offered employment for a total number of work hours equal to at least three fourths of the workdays of the total period that begins with the first workday after the arrival of the worker at the place of employment or the advertised contractual fist date of need, whichever is later, and ends on the expiration date specified in the work contract or in its extensions, if any.

PROVISION OF TOOLS, SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT

The employer will provide workers at no charge all tools, supplies, and equipment required to perform the job. Furthermore, the employer will supply workers at no charge all safety clothing and equipment and will require all workers to wear such clothing and equipment always during work.

COMPANY: IMPERIAL PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL (CNMI), LLC

JOB TITLE: Construction Laborer

NUMBER OF OPENING: 95

OPENING DATE: December 09, 2019

WAGES/SALARY: \$11.03 to \$15.00 per hour / Overtime Rate: \$16.55 to \$22.50 per hour

EMPLOYMENT BASIS & DURATION

This job opportunity is for a temporary, full-time position beginning on January 31, 2020 and ending on January 30, 2021.

JOB LOCATION

Imperial Palace – Saipan, CPL Derence Jack Road, Orchid Street, Garapan, Saipan, MP 96950

JOB DUTIES

- Control traffic passing near, in, or around work zones
- clean or prepare construction sites to eliminate possible hazards
- signal equipment operators to facilitate alignment, movement, or adjustments of machinery, or materials
- read plans, instructions, or specifications to determine work activities
- load, unload, or identify building materials, machinery, or tools, distributing them to the appropriate locations, according to project plans or specifications
- measure, mark, or record openings or distances to layout areas where construction work will be performed
- dig ditches or trenches, backfill excavations, or compact and level earth to grade specifications, using picks, shovels, pneumatic tampers, or rakes
- mix, pour, or spread concrete, using portable cement mixers
- tend pumps, compressors, or generators to provide power for tools, machinery, or equipment or heat or move materials such as asphalt
- erect or dismantle scaffolding, shoring, braces, traffic barricades, ramps or other temporary structures
- provide assistance to craft workers, such as carpenters, plasterers or masons
- lubricate, clean, or repair machinery, equipment and tools
- position or dismantle form for pouring concrete, using saws, hammers, nails or bolts
- smooth or finish freshly poured cement or concrete, using float, trowels, screeds, or powered cement finishing tools
- operate jackhammers or drills to break up concrete or pavement
- install sewer, water, or storm drain pipes, using pipe-laying machinery or laser guidance equipment
- operate or maintain air monitoring or other sampling devices in confined or hazardous environments
- mix ingredients to create compounds for covering or clearing surfaces
- grind, scrape, sand and polish surfaces, such as concrete, marble, terrazzo, or wood flooring, using polishers or machines
- position, join, align or seal structural components, such as concrete wall sections or pipes
- tend machinery that pump concrete, grout, cement, sand, plaster, or stucco through spray guns for application to ceilings or walls
- spray materials, such as water, sand, steam, vinyl, paint, or stucco, through hoses to clean, coat, or seal surfaces
- apply caulking compounds by hand or caulking guns to protect against entry of water or air
- mop, brush, or spray paints, cleaning solutions, or other compounds over surfaces to clean them or to provide protection
- perform the activities required of green certified construction practices, such as implementing waste management procedures, identifying materials for reuse, or installing erosion or sedimentation control mechanisms
- apply weather-stripping to reduce energy loss

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

High school diploma or above. 12 months of on-the-job experience as a Construction Laborer is a minimum requirement for this position.

WORK HOURS

Employees hired under this announcement will work on full time employment thirty-five (35) hours per week. There are three rotating shifts per day. (A) Day Shift will be from 6:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. (B) Swing Shift will be from 2:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. (C) Night Shift will be from 10:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m. Employee hired under this announcement will be rotated through each of the three shifts

SINGLE WORKWEEK FOR PAY

The employer will use a single workweek as its standard for computing wages due.

FREQUENCY OF PAY

Workers will be paid on bi-weekly basis.

HOUSING & MEAL

The employer will provide optional housing at no cost per week, during the employment. The employees will be provided one (1) duty meal per day at no expense for the duration of the employment.

DEDUCTIONS

The employer will make all deductions from the employee's paycheck required by laws.

INBOUND/OUTBOUND TRANSPORTATION AND SUBSISTENCE

The Employer shall pay for all inbound transportation and subsistence from the place of recruitment to the place of work. Upon completion of the work contract, or where the worker is dismissed earlier, the employer will provide or pay for worker's reasonable costs of return transportation and subsistence back home or to the place the worker originally departed to work, except where the worker will not return due to subsequent employment with another employer or where the employer has appropriately reported a worker's voluntary abandonment of employment.

FOR IMMEDIATE HIRING

Travel subsistence starts with the rate of \$12.46 per day up to a maximum of \$55.00 with receipts.

DAILY TRANSPORTATION

The employer will provide daily transportation at no charge to and from the worker's provided lodging for the duration of the employment.

FIRST WORK WEEK REIMBURSEMENT

Workers will be reimbursed in the first workweek for all visa, visa processing, border crossing, and other related fees, including those mandated by the government (except passport fees).

THREE-FOURTHS GUARANTEE

Workers will be offered employment for a total number of work hours equal to at least three fourths of the workdays of the total period that begins with the first workday after the arrival of the worker at the place of employment or the advertised contractual fist date of need, whichever is later, and ends on the expiration date specified in the work contract or in its extensions, if any.

PROVISION OF TOOLS, SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT

The employer will provide workers at no charge all tools, supplies, and equipment required to perform the job. Furthermore, the employer will supply workers at no charge all safety clothing and equipment and will require all workers to wear such clothing and equipment always during work.

COMPANY: IMPERIAL PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL (CNMI), LLC

JOB TITLE: Crane and Tower Operator

NUMBER OF OPENING: 5

OPENING DATE: December 09, 2019

WAGES/SALARY: \$21.52 to \$32.28 per hour / Overtime Rate: \$32.28 to \$48.42 per hour

EMPLOYMENT BASIS & DURATION

This job opportunity is for a temporary, full-time position beginning on January 31, 2020 and ending on January 30, 2021.

JOB LOCATION

Imperial Palace – Saipan, CPL Derence Jack Road, Orchid Street, Garapan, Saipan, MP 96950

JOB DUTIES

- Determine load weights and check them against lifting capacities to prevent overload
- Move levers, depress foot pedals, or turn dials to operate cranes, cherry pickers, electromagnets, or other moving equipment for lifting, moving, or placing loads
- Inspect and adjust crane mechanisms or lifting accessories to prevent malfunctions or damage
- Direct helpers engaged in placing blocking or outrigger under cranes
- Clean, lubricate, and maintain mechanisms such as cables, pulleys, or grapples, making repairs as necessary
- Load or unload bundles from trucks or move containers to storage bins, using moving equipment
- Review daily work or delivery schedules to determine orders, sequences of deliveries, or special loading instructions
- Inspect bundle packaging for conformance to regulations or customer requirements and remove and batch packaging tickets
- Direct truck drivers backing vehicles into loading bays and cover, uncover, or secure loads for delivery
- Weigh bundles, using floor scales, and record weights for company records

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

High school diploma or above. 24 months of on-the-job experience as a Crane and Tower Operator is a minimum requirement for this position.

WORK HOURS

Employees hired under this announcement will work on full time employment thirty-five (35) hours per week. There are three rotating shifts per day. (A) Day Shift will be from 6:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. (B) Swing Shift will be from 2:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. (C) Night Shift will be from 10:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m. Employee hired under this announcement will be rotated through each of the three shifts

SINGLE WORKWEEK FOR PAY

The employer will use a single workweek as its standard for computing wages due.

FREQUENCY OF PAY

Workers will be paid on bi-weekly basis.

HOUSING & MEAL

The employer will provide optional housing at no cost per week, during the employment. The employees will be provided one (1) duty meal per day at no expense for the duration of the employment.

DEDUCTIONS

The employer will make all deductions from the employee's paycheck required by laws.

INBOUND/OUTBOUND TRANSPORTATION AND SUBSISTENCE

The Employer shall pay for all inbound transportation and subsistence from the place of recruitment to the place of work. Upon completion of the work contract, or where the worker is dismissed earlier, the employer will provide or pay for worker's reasonable costs of return transportation and subsistence back home or to the place the worker originally departed to work, except where the worker will not return due to subsequent employment with another employer or where the employer has appropriately reported a worker's voluntary abandonment of employment. Travel subsistence starts with the rate of \$12.46 per day up to a maximum of \$55.00 with receipts.

DAILY TRANSPORTATION

The employer will provide daily transportation at no charge to and from the worker's provided lodging for the duration of the employment.

FIRST WORK WEEK REIMBURSEMENT

Workers will be reimbursed in the first workweek for all visa, visa processing, border crossing, and other related fees, including those mandated by the government (except passport fees).

THREE-FOURTHS GUARANTEE

Workers will be offered employment for a total number of work hours equal to at least three fourths of the workdays of the total period that begins with the first workday after the arrival of the worker at the place of employment or the advertised contractual fist date of need, whichever is later, and ends on the expiration date specified in the work contract or in its extensions, if any.

PROVISION OF TOOLS, SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT

The employer will provide workers at no charge all tools, supplies, and equipment required to perform the job. Furthermore, the employer will supply workers at no charge all safety clothing and equipment and will require all workers to wear such clothing and equipment always during work.

COMPANY: IMPERIAL PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL (CNMI), LLC

JOB TITLE: Electrician

NUMBER OF OPENING: 170

OPENING DATE: December 09, 2019

WAGES/SALARY: \$18.52 to \$28.95 per hour / Overtime Rate: \$27.78 to \$43.42 per hour

EMPLOYMENT BASIS & DURATION

Season of giving: IT&E supports local organizations

November was a time of giving for IT&E with contributions to several community organizations that make a difference in the CNMI community all the year round.

IT&E, IP&E, and Bank of Guam presented donations totaling more than \$16,000 to the Autism Society of the

CNMI, Micronesia Islands Nature Alliance, and Make-A-Wish Foundation CNMI and Guam. The funds were raised during the 2nd annual Marianas Golf Classic. More than 100 golfers participated in the event.

"I thank all the members of the community that sup-

ported the Marianas Golf Classic, which in turn is now giving the Autism Society of the CNMI, Micronesia Islands Nature Alliance and Make-A-Wish Foundation CNMI and Guam the resources they need to carry out their missions," said Rose Soledad, general manager of IT&E. "The

strength in our community lies within our commitment to each other."

Empowering the women of the Marianas, IT&E also presented the Commonwealth Women's Association with a donation of \$1,500 for its first Fun-Raise-Her dinner

event last Nov. 22, 2019. The event celebrated women's empowerment and helped raise funds to support the association's objectives, including providing education opportunities, training and development to women to encourage them to become leaders in the

community and in business. "Today, and every day, we are standing with the community to uplift and empower women. We are proud to be able to give the CWA the support it needs to provide opportunities to women," said Soledad. (PR)



IT&E, IP&E, and Bank of Guam present the Autism Society of the CNMI with a donation of \$5,386.67 raised through the companies' 2nd Annual Marianas Golf Classic. **CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS**

IT&E, IP&E, and Bank of Guam present the Micronesia Islands Nature Alliance with a donation of \$5,499.67 raised through the companies' 2nd Annual Marianas Golf Classic.



IT&E, IP&E, and Bank of Guam present the Make-A-Wish Foundation Guam and CNMI with a donation of \$5,386.67 raised through the companies' 2nd Annual Marianas Golf Classic.



IT&E supports the empowerment of women with a contribution to the Commonwealth Women's Association. From left, Annamae Adaza, CWA board member; Linda Cabrera, program administrator; Felicidad Ogunoro, program administrator, all three with the CNMI Women's Association; and Hans Mickelson, Enterprise Business Group/sales manager at IT&E.



PROMO VALID 'TIL DEC. 31, 2019

Holiday Specials

For Saipan, Tinian, Rota and Guam residents

TOYOTA YARIS \$2995

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ATTENTION Government Employees & Retirees!

The Island Smiles Dental Plan available via your bi-weekly allotment

- **Low Cost:** \$5.00 (Individual Plan) \$6.00 (Two-Party Plan) or \$7.00 (Family Plan) per allotment. Least expensive dental plan in the CNMI
- Members receive at LEAST 20%-50% discounts on all dental procedures. No exceptions!
- **Plan Provider:** Paradise Dental Spa. State-of-the-art, full service General and Cosmetic dental clinic. Newest dental clinic and most experienced dentists in the CNMI. Really nice people!



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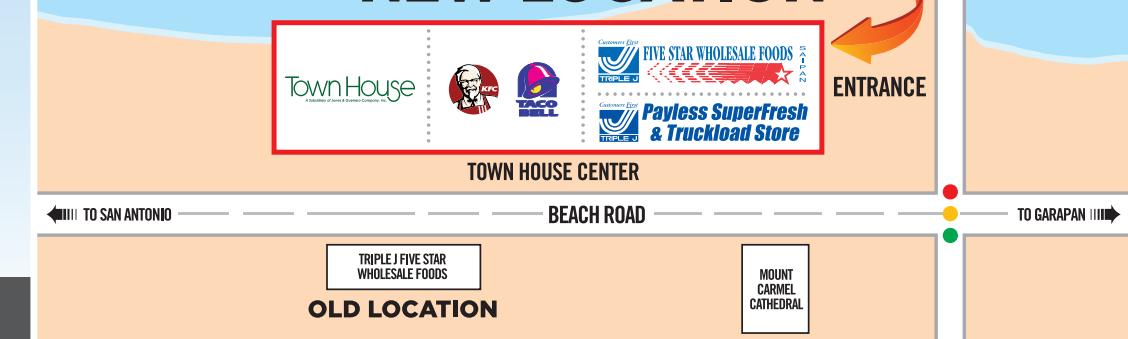
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Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

Office of the Executive Director



EMERGENCY REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS CUC-RFP-20-004

FINANCIAL AND COMPLIANCE AUDIT FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2019, 2020 & 2021

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed proposals for services of a U.S. Certified Public Accounting Firm/Individual with knowledge, skill, and experience in auditing (1) financial statements in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and auditing standards of the U.S. and; (2) federal awards programs in accordance with the Single Audit Act and U.S. Office of Management and Budget requisites

- Provide assistance to the CUC management with the preparation of the annual financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America
- Ensure that the financial statements and auditor's reports also meet any specific requirements contained in agreements or other contractual requirements relative to financial statement presentation and the audits.
- Submit the draft financial statements and accompanying auditor's reports to CUC management no later than January 31st of each year, and issue the final reports no later than February 28th of each year.
- Provide 15 bound copies of the final financial statements and accompanying auditor's report
- Provide an electronic copy (e.g., .pdf format) of the final report to the CUC.

Auditors are responsible to review the 2019, 2020 & 2021 financial statements to include the physical CUC assets for each fiscal year.

The RFP package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$100.00 for one RFP package set. The \$100 package fee will be waived for firms that had previously registered and paid for a CUC-RFP-19-037 package.

One (1) original and five (5) hard copies of the Proposal & One (1) original and five (5) hard copies of the Cost Proposal must be submitted in a separate sealed envelopes marked "CUC-RFP-20-004, Financial and Compliance Audit for Fiscal Year Ending September 30, 2019, 2020 & 2021" to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than December 23, 2019 at 10:00 AM (ChST). Late submissions and conditional RFP will not be considered.

Discussions may be conducted with responsible proposers who submit proposal determined to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for award for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. All proposers shall be accorded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity for discussion. During discussions, there will be no disclosure of any information derived from the proposal submitted by competing proposers.

All proposers are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the proposer due to lack of information or understanding of the RFP requirements in the course of proposer's preparation of the RFP under the contract. The RFP does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the RFP under this request, or to procure or contract for services. Proposers are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This RFP and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered prospective proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on December 10, 2019** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Greg Cruz, CUC Chief Financial Officer, via email address greg.cruz@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any reason and to waive any defects in said RFP, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

GARY CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY BOYER SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

DPS: Missing woman still on island

The Department of Public Safety has looked into airline records and found nothing to indicate that the woman who has been reported missing, Florita Arbas Rivera, may have left the CNMI.

Rivera, who has been missing since Nov. 26, 2019, reportedly did not leave Saipan, according to DPS spokesperson Dre Pangelinan.

In addition, DPS also found a note in Rivera's house asking for prayers from her loved ones, Pangelinan said.

"DPS can confirm that she has not left the island. A short note was found in Ms. Rivera's apartment asking family members to pray for her. As of right now, that is the only

info," he said.

Rivera was reported missing last Nov. 26 after she failed to report for work and was nowhere to be found. Her cell phone and keys, however, were found at her home in Garapan.

DPS describes Rivera as 5'4" tall, weighs 160 lbs. with black hair, and brown eyes. **(Kimberly A. Bautista)**



TOP WINNER IN 4-H INITIATIVE

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

4-H Marianas, in partnership with the Northern Marianas College-Cooperative Research, Extension, and Education Services-Family, Community and Youth Development Program, recently received \$20,000 for placing first in the National 4-H Council's "Raise Your Hand" Initiative. This funding helps more children in their communities benefit from the hands-on learning programs 4-H offers, helping children serve their community and build critical life skills needed to thrive.



Commonwealth Zoning Board (Zoning Office) JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

Zoning Officer

The Zoning Office is seeking a qualified applicant for the position of Zoning Officer. This is a full-time position on Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Duties and Responsibilities: Process permit applications including reviewing applications for compliance, tracking timelines and public notice requirements, coordinating interagency consultations, and preparing written recommendations; Conduct field surveys and inspections for compliance with the Zoning Law and to collect land use information; Educate and inform the public and applicants about the zoning program and permit requirements; Gather information to update the GIS; Maintain detailed records of all actions, using paper and electronic media; Update permit information on the database; Other duties as assigned.

Minimum Requirements: Graduation from an accredited two-year college or university with an AA Degree. The following professional experience may substitute for the AA Degree: A minimum of 3 years of experience in any combination of land use planning, zoning, public administration, public health, business management, public policy, natural resource management, environmental management, land management, or related field; Proficiency with office software including MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook Explorer. Other desired experiences include ability to drive a stick-shift car and to walk into construction sites and across rough terrain; Ability to communicate effectively orally and in writing; Ability to work flexible hours, including some evenings and weekends; Ability to speak in Chamorro or Carolinian a plus. Applicant must have a valid CNMI Driver's License.

The salary is \$28,000.00. Information about the Zoning Board and the Zoning Office may be viewed at the Zoning Board website: www.zoning.gov.mp. Application submittals should be addressed to the Acting Zoning Administrator. Submittals may be sent via e-mail, FAX, U.S. mail, or hand delivered to the address below. Submittals must include a letter of interest, a CNMI Application for Employment, and a resume. The Application for Employment may be picked up from the Zoning Office or the Office of Personnel Management. Applicants must be US citizens, permanent residents or immediate relatives. Please send submittals to: E-mail: Yubert.Alepuyo@zoning.gov.mp or to the Zoning Office, 2nd Floor, Joeten Building, Dandan, Saipan.

The deadline to receive applications and all requirements is
Tuesday, December 24, 2019 at 3:00pm.



Commonwealth Zoning Board JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

The Zoning Office is seeking qualified applicants for the following position. These are full-time positions on Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Zoning Enforcement Tech (3)

Duties and Responsibilities:

Conduct field surveys; Collect land use information; Prepare and serve notices of violation and other compliance documents; Write follow-up enforcement notices; Maintain enforcement database and files; Prepare enforcement reports, Perform other related duties as assigned.

Minimum Requirements:

A minimum of 2 years background in the following:

Any combination of land use planning, zoning, public administration, public health & safety, business management, public policy, natural resource management, environmental management, land management, regulatory and permitting enforcement or related field; Proficiency with office software including MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook Explorer. Other desired experiences include ability to drive a stick-shift car and to walk into construction sites and across rough terrain; ability to communicate effectively orally and in writing; and ability to work flexible hours, including some evenings and weekends. Applicant must have a valid CNMI Driver's License.

The salary will start at \$25,000. Health, life and retirement benefits are provided. Information about the Zoning Board and the Zoning Office may be viewed at the Zoning Board website: www.zoning.gov.mp. Application submittals should be addressed to the Zoning Enforcement Chief. Submittals may be sent via e-mail, FAX, U.S. mail, or hand delivered to the address below. Submittals must include a letter of interest, a CNMI Application For Employment, and a resume. The Application for Employment may be picked up from the Zoning Office or the Office of Personnel Management. Applicants must be US citizens, permanent residents or immediate relatives. Please send submittals to the Acting Zoning Administrator: E-mail: Yubert.Alepuyo@zoning.gov.mp or deliver to the Zoning Office, 2nd Floor, Joeten Building, Dandan, Saipan.

The deadline to receive applications and all requirements is
Tuesday, December 24, 2019 at 3:00pm.

Holiday program at AMP

This holiday season, join the American Memorial Park and its partner, Pacific Historic Parks as we remember those who served our country overseas during World War II, far from home.

Youth in grades K-5 are invited to join us for "Operation Christmas." The program will highlight the importance of "peace on earth," include a reading of a World War II holiday theme book, and ornament and card making stations. Youth will also have the opportunity to mail their holiday cards to a war veteran.

Free health screening on Saturday

To increase awareness about maintaining good health and to promote education on disease prevention, the National Youth Movement for West Philippine Sea, US Pinoys for Good Governance, National Federation of Filipino American Associations-Marianas chapter (CNMI and Guam), BAYANI (Bayan Bago Sarili) and the Asian Community of the CNMI will be holding a free three-hour health screening on Saturday, Dec. 14, 2019, from 8am to 11am, at San Antonio Parish Social Hall in San Antonio, Saipan.

Registration starts at 7:30am and will be continuing until 10am.

People who would like to avail of the blood sugar tests are advised to refrain from eating and drinking, preferably 12 hours prior to the actual testing.

Free screenings that will be available at the site are for blood pressure, pulse rate, oxygen saturation level using pulse oximetry test, blood sugar, weight, height,

The program will be held on Saturday, Dec. 14, 2019, at the American Memorial Park Visitor Center. Youth can join the morning session from 9am to 11:30am or the afternoon session from 1pm to 3:30pm. Parents or guardians must sign up children at the Visitor Center on the day of the program. Slots are limited and filled on a first-come, first-served basis.

For more information, contact Pacific Historic Parks education specialist Jovannalyn Mafnas as (670) 234-7207 x 2020 or jmafna@pacifichistoricparks.org. (PR)



LIONS DONATION

The Saipan Marianas Lions Club donates \$500 to the TanHoldings Football Club last Dec. 3 as part of the #LionsFightDiabetes global cause.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

ANNUAL VIP DAY 2019

(Hannam and Tenda (Koblerville) / Twins Supermarket (Dandan) / Twins Supermarket (Navy Hill)

Join us in celebrating our Annual VIP day, our small way of appreciating our loyal customers. We thank you for your continuous support.

SCHEDULE OF CLAIM BOOTH

Hannam (Koblerville)

December 13, 2019
@ Hannam Supermarket
10 am – 7 pm (Parking Lot)

Tenda (Koblerville)

December 14, 2019
@ Tenda Supermarket
10 am – 7 pm (Parking Lot)

Twins Supermarket (Dandan)

December 20-21, 2019
@ Twins Dandan
10 am – 7 pm (Parking Lot)

Twins Supermarket (Navy Hill)

December 15-16,
@ Twins Navy Hill
10 am – 7 pm (Parking Lot)

THINGS YOU NEED BRING TO CLAIM YOUR PRIZE:

1. VIP card: You must present your VIP card to be able to claim your prize. In the event of lost card, you can present the ID you used to get the card, the phone number used, or just the VIP card number to be able to get access to your VIP details.
2. Valid Identification Card: This is to verify that you are the rightful owner of the VIP card you are using.

NOTICE

1. The owner of the card must be present when redeeming VIP points. Only the card owner is allowed to redeem points. **
(some conditions apply)**
2. Item prizes are limited in quantity. Customers that came first will be prioritized. No reservation.
3. Prizes might change without prior notice. (Depending on the availability of the item)

HOW TO USE VIP POINTS TO CLAIM YOUR PRIZE

All VIP points must be redeemed.

The minimum VIP points redeemable are 500 points. VIP points allowed to be rolled over to the next year is 499 points and below. If by the end of this year's VIP day, over to the next year is 499 points and below. If by the end of this year's VIP day, let's say your unused VIP points is 650 points. Only 150 of the points will be considered for the next year. You will lose the 500 VIP points if not used. All VIP points must be used to redeem your prizes.

Example: 4,999 VIP Points

- 3,000 VIP Points (must redeem large item)
- 1,999 VIP Points (left over VIP points)
- 1,000 (must redeem 2nd item)
- 999 VIP Points (left over VIP points)
- 500 VIP Points (must redeem 3rd item)
- 499 VIP Points (left over VIP points)

Only 499 points and below are allowed to roll over for the next VIP day.
Same applies to higher VIP points.



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Traffic hearings set

All parties with traffic citation(s) scheduled for hearing (arraignment) during the following dates will be held at the stated sites:

- Thursday, Dec. 12: Marianas Business Plaza, second floor, Courtroom 212B
- Thursday, Dec. 19: Marianas Business Plaza, second floor, Courtroom 212B
- Thursday Dec. 26: Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center

For additional information, contact the Office of the Clerk of Court at telephone number 236-9703, 783-8417, or 783-8522. (PR)

CHamoru commission meeting set

The Kumision i Fino' CHamoru yan i Fina'nå'guen i Historia yan i Lina'la' i Tao-tao Tåno' (Commission on

Opinion

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

A tragic lesson from measles outbreak

The grim numbers from Samoa ought to end ill-informed notions circulated by anti-vaccine activists that measles is a harmless, passing rash.

The small South Pacific country is in the midst of an alarming measles outbreak, with its government reporting 4,357 cases and 63 deaths as of Dec. 6. Most of the victims are young children. Fifty-five kids under the age of 9 have died. Life on the island has ground to a halt as the government and health experts from around the world work desperately to stop the spread of this virus with treatment and a rapid vaccination campaign.

Thanks to vaccines, which have made measles relatively rare in the U.S., current generations of parents and grandparents have had the luxury of forgetting how severe a disease measles can be. The reality made painfully clear in Samoa is that the virus is far from vanquished. It still can spread rapidly and make those infected gravely ill. Letting vaccination rates lapse for measles and other serious childhood diseases is dangerous—a message public health officials must amplify to prevent more tragedies like the one in the South Pacific.

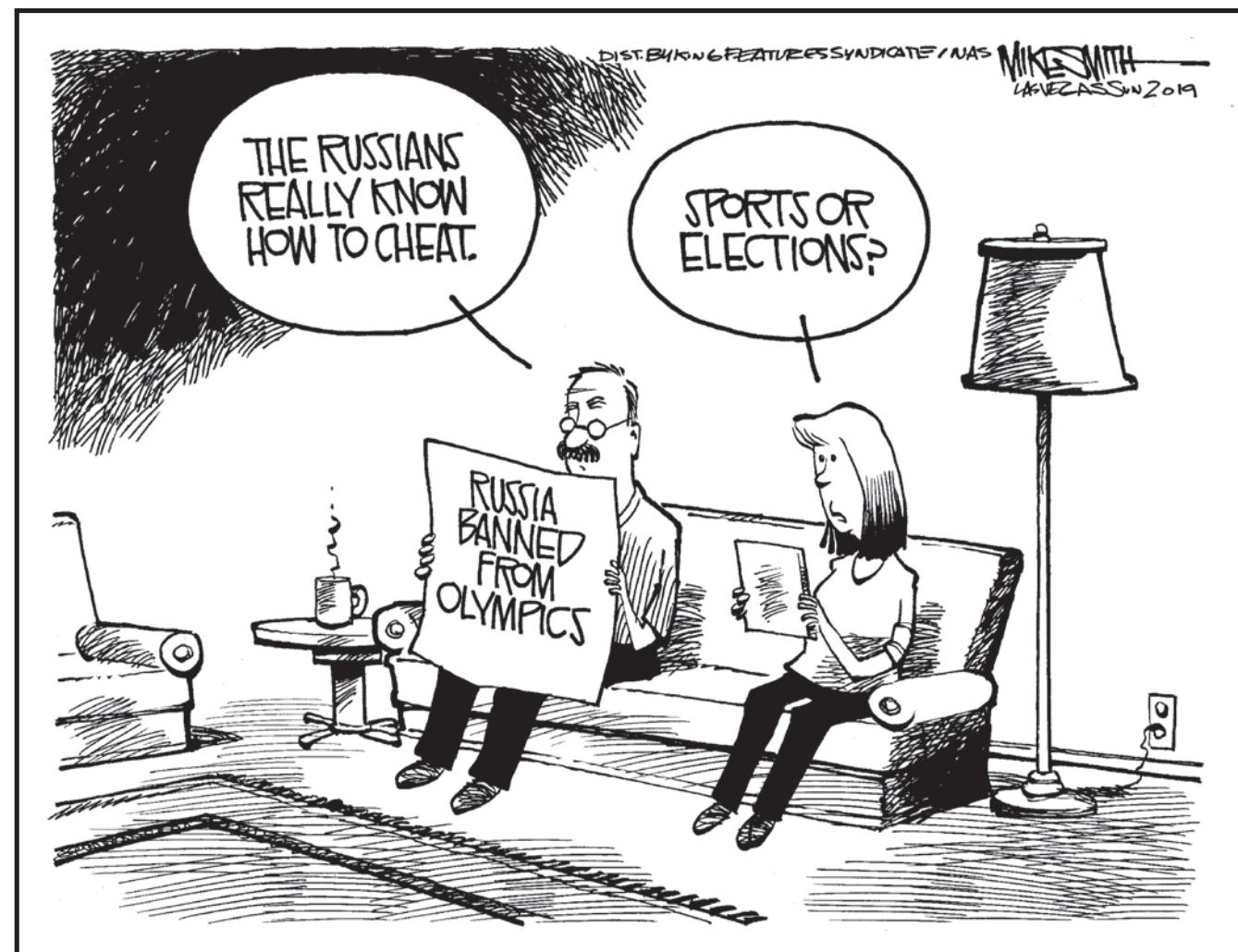
Vaccine conspiracy theorists take frequent aim at the measles, mumps and rubella vaccine. A small, flawed and long-discredited paper drew a link in the 1990s between the measles shot and autism risk. Numerous larger studies and comprehensive research reviews since then have repeatedly failed to document such a connection. But vaccine opponents have continued to spread this falsehood while downplaying measles' severity. Parents led astray have forgone immunizations.

In Samoa, fears about the vaccine were fueled further by a tragic accident. In 2018, two infants died after two nurses mistakenly mixed a muscle relaxant into the shots used at a clinic. Vaccination rates dipped to a precipitous level—31%. The virus took full advantage of the almost defenseless population when it arrived, likely via a traveler.

There are still some who may downplay the risks even as Samoa illustrates the danger. Pushing back against this is Dr. Peter Hotez, dean of the National School of Tropical Medicine at the Baylor College of Medicine. He has written a book refuting common anti-vaccine arguments, drawing upon not only his medical expertise but his own family's experience. His daughter, Rachel, has autism. In an interview last week, Hotez said that some falsely believe that measles is only a severe illness in extremely poor countries with high rates of malnutrition or without good medical care.

"This of course is false. For example in the New York City measles epidemic of 2019, of the roughly 600 cases, approximately 50 required hospitalization, including more than a dozen in the ICU. I believe the actual number was around 18. This is because measles can cause pneumonia in around 20% of the cases, and pneumonia is usually the leading complication leading to deaths in measles," Hotez said. "Moreover, even in those who survive measles, they can frequently have long-term complications, including permanent hearing

See OUTBREAK on Next Page



Black and brown children not represented in children's books

Thousands of English teachers and reading specialists took over the Baltimore Convention Center recently for the annual conference of the National Council of Teachers of English and its affiliated Assembly on Literature for Adolescents workshop. There I heard the same startling statistics over and over. Sadly, it wasn't the first time the numbers had been brought up at a meeting of book lovers. I had been hearing the same statistic for almost a year at conferences all over the country, including the National Women's Studies Association, the Kweli literary conference, the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators and Baltimore's CityLit Festival.

Panelists, keynote speakers and attendees all referred to—and some handed out copies of—a graphic released by the Cooperative Children's Book Center, which annually compiles and analyzes the number of books featuring children of color. It was not hard to see why everyone kept talking about it. The numbers were so ugly that we just couldn't get over it.

In 2018, just 1% of children's books featured an American Indian/First Nation protagonist. That's 23 out of 3,134 books published. Only 5%, or 170 books, starred Latinx children, while Asian Pacific Islanders and Asian Americans were the central characters in 7%, or 218 books. African American children were the main characters in 10%, or 301 of these books.

The real shocker and insult was that animals were featured as characters more often than children of color. That's right, 27% of books published in that year featured an animal as the protagonist. That's 864 books, more than those featuring children of color combined. The number featuring white children is 50%, or 1,558 books.

Believe it or not, these numbers actually represent progress. The CCBC, based at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, has been compiling these statistics since 1985, and the numbers have slowly but steadily improved. In 2015, for example, the number of books featuring Latinx children was 2.4%, African American children 7.6% and white children 73.3%.

Many of the scholars, educators and writers at the various conferences were hardly surprised by the data. There is quite a bit of buzz around terms like "representation," "inclusivity" and the ubiquitous "diversity." But the publishing world isn't doing a good job of practicing what they preach. As the legendary editor and publisher Chris Jackson said in a speech to the Association of American University Presses, "I'm often asked to speak about a thing that doesn't actually exist: diversity in publishing."

Jackson is one of the few African American editors working

By SUSAN MUADDI DARRAJ

The Baltimore Sun



Susan Muaddi Darraj, winner of a 2016 American Book Award, teaches creative writing at Johns Hopkins University and is an associate professor at Harford Community College. Her forthcoming children's book series, *Farah Rocks*, starring a Palestinian American protagonist, will be published in January.

in the industry. In the children's publishing world, the story is the same. Most editors, and thus most mentors and gatekeepers, are white. The lack of diversity in the publishing has real-world effects. Engagement with reading, a primary indicator of future success, is much lower among children of color. In fact, the reading scores of African American, Native American and Latinx children regularly lag behind those of white and Asian American children.

This is not, as some might erroneously conclude, because children of color do not enjoy reading. It's because books exclude them the way society does. I have had this experience in my own life. I enjoyed reading, but as a child, I felt disconnected from books because they simply didn't reflect my life. Favorites like "Anne of Green Gables," the "Nancy Drew" mysteries and even the "Ramona Quimby" books reminded me that I was a mere observer on the sidelines of white life.

And if the self-esteem and well-being of children of color does not move us, here's something else: Children from privileged backgrounds also need to see children from marginalized groups represented on the page. Books are mirrors, but they're also windows into other people's worlds, according to Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop's wonderful metaphor. White children also require authentic stories that are written by authors from marginalized communities in order to break through their own bubble. For in that terrifying bubble, people of color are caricatures who exist on a screen, in a meme or in a news headline.

I look forward to the CCBC's 2019 statistics. I hope the numbers will be more promising, but I fear that the progress, if any, will be incremental. Reading is fundamental, but we still need to prove that it's fundamental for all children.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

'Read this story, dirt bag!' and other tales of Americans being uncivil long before Twitter

By MARIA PANARITIS
THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

Le'ts play a game. I write down some words, and you guess the single year the bunch appeared in the newspaper: "Greeting-card companies have added 'Drop dead' and 'You're an (expletive)' messages to their product lines. Other entrepreneurs deliver bouquets of dead flowers and revenge-o-grams of rotting fish."

"High school sports leagues have started banning postgame handshakes to avoid fistfights."

"Donald Trump is forever referred to as a 'stubby-fingered vulgarian.'"

- a) 2019
- b) 2009
- c) 1999
- d) 1989

Consider, also, this other sampling of warm-and-fuzzy sentiments about society spiraling into the sewer:

"The current decline of civility is unprecedented. Especially in the United States."

"One reason more people are jerks is because they know they can get away with it. Years ago, we thought someone would stop us or punish us or our conscience would bother us. Now, police are overworked, religion is ignored and students have no fear of

teachers; teachers have fear of students."

"There's a cynicism about playing by the rules. Virtue isn't seen as its own reward. It's seen as a sign of foolishness. Nice guys finish last."

- a) 2019
- b) 2015
- c) 2009
- d) 1995

The answers to this fun-with-multiple-choice exercise may surprise you. Example No. 1 is from 30 years ago (1989). Example No. 2 is scarcely more current, dating to 1995. Yes, incivility is all around us today. But it is a movie we've already seen.

What a gas! I laughed, I cried. But most of all, I was grateful to see that the conventional wisdom of our times may be rubbish. That we may be wrong when we think that, in this moment of ubiquitous disgust and tribalism in America, we are drowning in a pit of digital bile unlike anything we have seen before.

Maybe it isn't all the internet's fault, people. Maybe humankind is just unkind. There's comfort in being reminded of that. It's why there's religion. And hot yoga.

This revelation of American life (and all the above material) comes from Inquirer archives. It was discovered through an accident of journalistic research. Just before Thanksgiving, I was scrolling through decades of news clips, looking for something entirely unrelated. Amid the blur of words on page after page, two headlines jumped out at me.

"AMERICA THE CYNICAL: HOW LOW CAN WE GO IN THE MEAN DEPARTMENT?" and "LET'S TALK RUDE"

I squinted. What year were these? I knew I had gone back decades, but this? It seemed like one of the many catastrophic online think pieces I'd read about the troubles of our current age. My smartphone-fatigued eyes stared at similarly verbose handwringing—but from a generation ago, before Google, Facebook, Twitter, texting and Snapchat.

Maybe we're not so doomed, after all.

Maybe this mess that we call modern life in America is as situational as all the others. Maybe it, too, shall pass. The hurling of insults toward family and friends. The holiday gatherings where

you hope the guy carving the turkey doesn't turn the knife on you as talk turns to Trump. The way kids in schools experience the cruelty of bullying by text. The way you hope that those children will come out of it all OK, and realize, as adults, that it was just one of the nasty things that comes and goes with time.

Perspective is one of life's biggest challenges. You want to be vigilant as societal norms seem to become dangerously distorted. And there's no arguing that we are in a dangerous time. We have real problems. Racial and ethnic discord; partisan anger and economic inequality. It's important to make sure, especially in a fragile democratic republic such as ours, that we are safeguarding a culture that binds us together as a nation, not fractures us into angry camps.

But you also need to know your history.

This is one reason journalism is sacred. It produces a record of our lives that can be looked at years later. In the course of any given day, we journalists stumble upon new information while doing little more than our jobs. Perspective forces its way into our minds, then onto our keyboards. With any luck, a reader out there in the universe decides to read what we have written.

The 1995 story about incivility, which I quoted above, alluded to the famous, mortal duel in 1804 between founding father Alexander Hamilton and then-vice-president Aaron Burr. The supporting headline could have easily been written today:

"AS BAD AS THINGS SEEM TO BE, LOOK BACK TO THE DAYS WHEN SWORDS IN PUBLIC WERE DE RIGUEUR."

Same with the lead sentence. It's a barb of such unfiltered, digital-age craftsmanship that you can easily imagine some guy in South Philly tweeting it while scarfing down a steak with cherry peppers and Cheese Whiz:

"READ THIS STORY, DIRT BAG!"

It ain't pretty. Never has been. But with any luck, this too, shall pass.

Maria Panaritis writes about Pennsylvania and its most populated region—the political battleground Philadelphia suburbs—for the Philadelphia Inquirer.

LITERARY NOOK

Under the Marianas Moon

By RIZA OLE DAN-RAMOS
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

She had walked along Beach Road late one afternoon,
Upon the blue Marianas waters shone the translucent moon,
The scene hasn't changed much: the wharf, the bench, the tree
And neither have the winds across the Philippine Sea
As she sat on the bench, Norfolk pines touched the sky
the tide seemed much stronger than on evenings gone by
He approached with the breeze, and at much the same pace
and both lifted her spirit as she lifted her face
His smile, she recalls, sparkled with twinkling grace
That smile hasn't changed since she first saw his face
In his eyes were a magic like stars shooting through the sky
Broad shoulders. Strong physique. Deep long sigh.
He uttered no words, but his loneliness peeked through
Her eyes, too, spoke of pain forever connecting the two
The evening was silent, as they sat side by side
Just the moon up above, and the breeze, and the tide
She would glimpse him in Garapan. A moment of glad.
Though she still bore the pain of the thoughts she once had
Looking back on the years even when islands apart
Nothing ever lessened the flame from that auspicious start
Tomorrow that moon will seem a world far away
she'll remember Beach Road and that warm fateful day
In that same open space where they forgave and they'll forget
A new dream and a new start as they watch the sunset
One more glimpse at the skies, and the moon seems much bolder
The tide is getting closer, the air seems much colder
Times have changed. Things will never be like that day
but love defies the odds and the curse of being away.

Riza Oledan-Ramos is a hemodialysis nurse at the Commonwealth Health Center and author of *The Boy Who Dreamed to Be With His Parents on Saipan, Germstopper Boy, and Drinking Seawater* (A Typhoon Soudelor Memoir).

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

A widening ripple

There is at least one positive side-effect to the Nov. 7, 2019, FBI raid on a variety of public and private offices on Saipan. Print media coverage will provide teachers of all middle and high schools, as well as NMC instructors, with an opportunity to have their students create meaningful bulletin boards and subjects for a variety of term papers.

No matter the outcome, the FBI investigation will have a significant impact on the history of the CNMI, and perhaps Washington, D.C. The Federal Bureau of Investigation would not spend the cash required to send three dozen agents halfway around the world without due diligence. And our federal judge would not approve the search warrants without due cause.

With respect to the American philosophy of "innocent until proven guilty," someone or some several someones will likely go down with the judge's gavel. The court hearings that follow will be most interesting. The organizational changes that result will affect every person in the CNMI, directly or indirectly.

OUTBREAK

From Page 10

loss, and immune suppression lasting for years."

Vaccines are a victim of their own success, allowing complacency in generations too young to recall the pain and panic childhood diseases once wreaked. The World Health Organization, UNICEF and other agencies must use their global reach and

Hopefully, the CNMI economy will survive and we retirees will continue to receive our benefits. And, hopefully, the CNMI will be better off as a result. But this event will cause change.

Be it history of the Northern Marianas, criminology, political science, or economics, all citizens can participate and perhaps should participate in the public dialogue. There may be some interesting challenge ahead for the CNMI Bar Association.

An enterprising educator might propose a symposium at the end of the next semester where top essays from students 7-14 could be presented. It could be repeated at the end of future semesters to compare changing attitudes and opinions, or to expand on existing questions and answers, similar to the biannual Marianas History Conference, including a compendium of the best papers.

Ultimately, a federal judge will make a decision and, undoubtedly, some of the 30 or so will go to jail. Does the CNMI government have to pay the bill, and, if so, how much, for how long?

So many questions, with such a wide scope of potential effects.

Don Farrell

Marpo Heights, Tinian

resources to counter vaccine disinformation and respond proactively in areas where immunization rates have dropped.

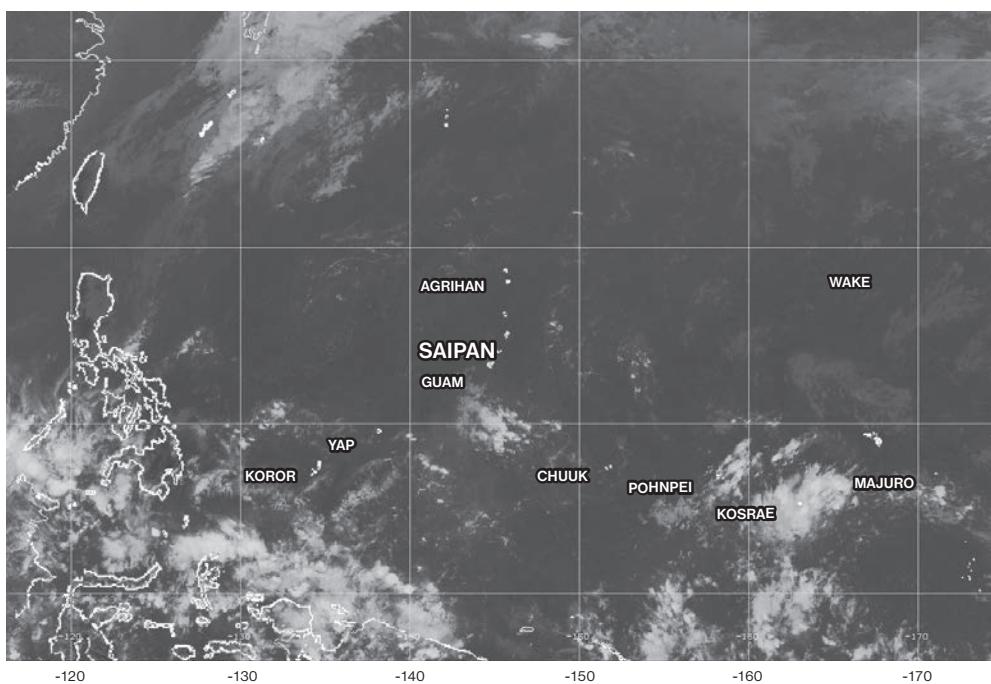
But parents also need to do their part. It's healthy to have questions about vaccine safety. But answers should be informed by medical expertise. Not every information source is worthy of trust.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Breezy. Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 20 to 25 mph.	Breezy during the day. Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Breezy during the day. Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Breezy during the day. Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
88°	77°	88°	77°	87°
76°	86°	76°	86°	76°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 5:58 AM, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2019

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A dry weather pattern will prevail through the week and the weekend with 700 mb relative humidity remaining mainly below 50 percent. High pressure building out over the Northwest Pacific will help cause an increase in wind speeds with breezy conditions Friday through the weekend as winds will be between 20 and 30 mph during the daytime.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA	▲	▼	°F
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy		87° / 80°
Palau	Thunderstorms		85° / 78°
Yap	Thunderstorms		87° / 80°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms		86° / 80°
Pohnpei	Sunny		86° / 77°
Kosrae	Mostly Sunny		85° / 81°
Majuro	Thunderstorms		86° / 81°

AROUND THE GLOBE	▲	▼	°F
Auckland	Partly Cloudy		73° / 63°
Beijing	Sunny		48° / 21°
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy		73° / 64°
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny		85° / 73°
London	Rain		52° / 43°
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy		72° / 55°
Manila	Partly Cloudy		90° / 79°
Melbourne	Cloudy		70° / 57°
Miami	Thunderstorms		79° / 73°
New York	Snow		39° / 27°
Osaka	Partly Cloudy		54° / 41°
Paris	Rain		46° / 45°
Busan	Partly Cloudy		52° / 45°
Rome	Showers		54° / 39°
Salem	Showers		51° / 42°
San Francisco	Mostly Cloudy		56° / 49°
Seoul	Mostly Cloudy		45° / 28°
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy		48° / 39°
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny		38° / 29°



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY FEET		
1:33 AM	LOW TIDE	-0.45
8:32 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.69
1:50 PM	LOW TIDE	0.99
6:52 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.74

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:32 AM	5:47 PM
Friday	6:33 AM	5:48 PM
Saturday	6:34 AM	5:48 PM
Sunday	6:34 AM	5:48 PM
Monday	6:35 AM	5:49 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	6:14 AM	5:52 PM
Friday	-	7:11 AM	6:47 PM
Saturday	-	8:10 AM	7:45 PM
Sunday	-	9:07 AM	8:45 PM
Monday	-	10:01 AM	9:45 PM

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 2, 2019

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA117 9:15am 9:55am Daily				UA174 7:30am 8:11am Daily			
UA105 6:20pm 7:00pm 2, 4, 6				UA104 4:45pm 5:26pm 2, 4, 6			
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
SKY811 10:15am 3:00pm Daily				SKY816 4:35pm 7:30pm 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7			
				SKY816 5:05pm 8:00pm 6			
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)				BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN			
7C3451 3:20am 6:30am Daily				7C3452 9:35pm 2:30am+1 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7			
				7C3452 10:05pm 2:30am+1 3			
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)				SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
TW308 2:05am 6:05am Daily				OZ623 8:00am 1:20pm 2, 4, 6			
OZ626 2:10am 6:05am 1				OZ623 8:55am 2:30pm 1, 3, 5, 7			
OZ626 2:50am 6:25am 3, 7				7C3402 10:10am 3:30pm Daily			
OZ626 2:50am 6:40am 2, 4, 5, 6				TW309 11:10am 4:25pm Daily			
7C3403 4:35am 8:35am Daily				OZ625 7:30pm 1:00am+1 7			
OZ6243 3:20pm 7:10pm 2, 4, 6				TW307 7:45pm 1:05am+1 Daily			
OZ6243 3:50pm 7:40pm 1, 3, 5, 7				OZ625 8:20pm 1:40am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6			
7C3401 4:30pm 8:25pm Daily				7C3404 10:10pm 3:40am+1 Daily			
TW310 5:25pm 10:15pm Daily							
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)				SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN			
3U8648 6:10am 8:50am 4, 7				3U8647 10:30pm 4:30am+1 3, 6			
SAIPAN-HANGZHOU (GHG)				HANGZHOU (GHG)-SAIPAN			



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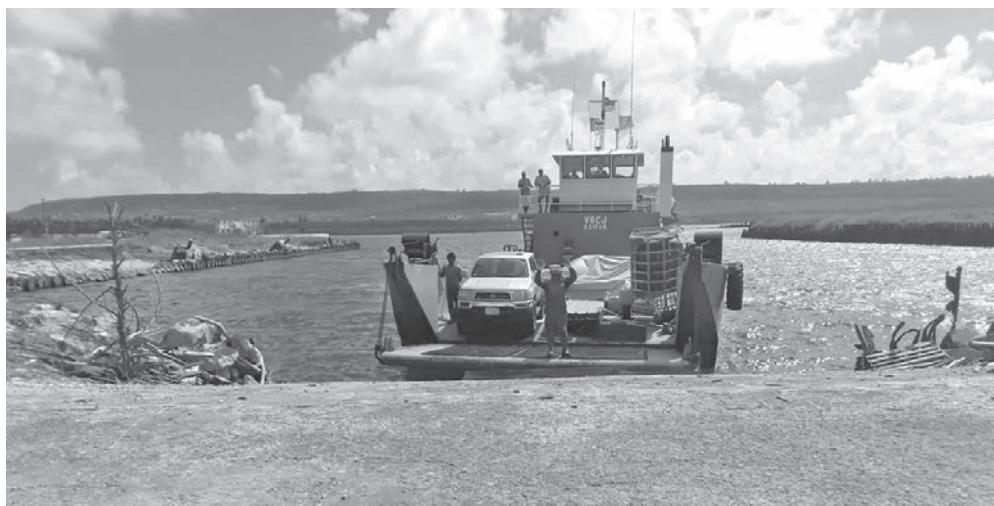
STORE HOURS: DAILY 8:00AM - 9:00PM

FOR MORE INFO, PLEASE CALL: 322-0430



Business

GPPC Marine offers cargo services between Saipan, Tinian



The MV Jayden unloads cargo, including an SUV, on the Tinian harbor.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

A construction company in the CNMI is venturing into the cargo business after experiencing firsthand the difficulties and the high cost of shipping material and equipment between Saipan and Tinian.

GPPC Marine LLC, through its 78-foot landing craft-style, roll-on, roll-off vessel, the MV *Jayden*, is currently offering cargo shipping services from Saipan to Tinian and Tinian to

Saipan.

Rene Escano, operations manager of GPPC Marine, said the U.S. Coast Guard-certified MV *Jayden* is available for special charters at a cost of \$5,000 for one way.

He said if they're not busy with special charters, the MV *Jayden* and her crew operate regular shipping service between the two islands Tuesday and Thursday.

The MV *Jayden*, which has a 35-ton capacity, was constructed by GPPC way back

in 2010 and can be considered the first commercial cargo ship built in the CNMI from bow to stern.

Escano said GPPC spent around \$700,000 to build the MV *Jayden* and she can carry up to two 40-foot containers, or four 20-foot containers, or breakbulk cargo on its deck.

The genesis of the MV *Jayden*, Escano said, began when GPPC Saipan had a construction project on Tinian and saw a business opportunity if the company itself owns a



The MV *Jayden* is 78-foot landing craft-style, roll-on, roll-off vessel that plies the commercial cargo route between Saipan and Tinian.

cargo vessel to ship materials and equipment to and from both islands.

In the immediate aftermath of Super Typhoon Yutu, GPPC Marine was contracted by the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. to ferry power poles and other material to Tinian to rebuild the power grid on the island.

Bridge Investment Group LLC has also been using the MV *Jayden* to carry materi-



als and equipment to Tinian, where the Hong Kong-based company is building a casino resort hotel, Escano said.

Interestingly, while MV *Jayden* usually carries construction materials and equipment to Tinian, she will then have cattle and produce like watermelon on her decks as cargo on the way back to Saipan.

GPPC Marine can also ship cargo to Rota, but at a steeper price of \$15,000 one way. Compared to Tinian's three-and-a-half-hour voyage, going to Rota could take as much as 10-12 hours.

For more information about GPPC Marine and MV *Jayden*, contact Malou Roque at (670) 989-3329 or malour@gppcinc.com; Ruby Traya at (670) 989-0938 or rubyqt@gppcinc.com; Rodante Pascua at (670) 989-3230 or enteng-pascua777@gmail.com; or Jerry Araneta (670) 989-3100 (Tinian base).

Democrats, White House forge new North American trade deal

WASHINGTON (AP)—House Democrats and the White House announced a deal Tuesday on a modified North American trade pact, handing President Donald Trump a major Capitol Hill win on the same day that impeachment charges were announced against him. Both sides hailed the deal as a win for American workers.

They said the revamped U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement was a significant improvement over the original North American Free Trade Agreement, with Democrats crowing about winning stronger provisions on enforcing

the agreement while Republicans said it will help keep the economy humming along.

"There is no question of course that this trade agreement is much better than NAFTA," House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., said in announcing the agreement, saying the pact is "infinitely better than what was initially proposed by the administration."

Trump said the revamped trade pact will "be great" for the United States.

"It will be the best and most important trade deal ever made by the USA. Good for everybody - Farmers, Manufacturers, Energy, Unions - tremen-

dous support. Importantly, we will finally end our Country's worst Trade Deal, NAFTA!" the president said in a tweet.

The deal announcement came on the same morning that Democrats outlined impeachment charges against Trump. The trade pact is Trump's top Capitol Hill priority along with funding for his long-sought border fence.

Trump said it was no coincidence that Democrats announced they had come to an agreement shortly after laying out the two impeachment charges they will seek against him.

"They were very embarrassed by (impeachment),

and that's why they brought up USMCA an hour after because they figure it will muffle it a little bit," Trump told reporters at the White House before departing for a campaign rally in Pennsylvania.

In Mexico City, Trump's son-in-law and senior adviser, Jared Kushner, U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer and Canadian Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland joined Mexican officials to sign the updated version of the United States-Mexico-Canada trade agreement, or USMCA, at a ceremony in Mexico City's centuries-old National Palace.



LEADING INDICATORS

DOW	S&P	NASDAQ
27,881.72	3,132.52	8,616.18
-27.88	-3.44	-5.64

In U.S. dollar terms

EXCHANGE RATES

	Hong Kong Dollar	7.8219	Russian Ruble	63.2732
Australian Dollar	1.4670	Indian Rupee	70.1146	Singapore Dollar
British Pound	0.7609	Japanese Yen	108.7550	South Korean Won
Canadian Dollar	1.3229	Malaysian Ringgit	4.1180	Swiss Franc
Chinese Yuan	6.9129	New Zealand Dollar	1.5322	Taiwan Dollar
Euro	0.9019	Philippine Peso	49.8250	Thailand Baht

Nation

6 killed in New Jersey gunbattle, including police officer

JERSEY CITY, N.J. (AP)—Six people, including a police officer and three bystanders, were killed in a furious gunbattle Tuesday that filled the streets of Jersey City with the sound of heavy fire for hours, authorities said.

The dead included the two gunmen, Jersey City Police Chief Michael Kelly said.

The slain officer, Detective Joseph Seals, 40, was credited by his superiors with having led the department in the number of illegal guns removed from the streets in recent years, and might have been trying to stop an incident involving such weapons when he was cut down by gunfire that erupted near a cemetery, authorities said.

The shooting then continued at a kosher supermarket about a mile away, where five more bodies were found, Kelly said. “It’s a really tough day for the city of Jersey City,” Mayor Steven Fulop said. Seals “was one of the best officers for getting the most guns off the streets. He was a good cop.”

US charges: Mexico ex-security chief took bribes from cartel

NEW YORK (AP)—Mexico’s former top security chief has been indicted in New York City on charges he accepted a fortune in drug-money bribes from kingpin Joaquin “El Chapo” Guzman’s notorious Sinaloa cartel to let it operate with impunity in Mexico.

Genaro Garcia Luna, 51, was charged in federal court in Brooklyn with three counts of cocaine trafficking conspiracy and a false statements charge.

Garcia Luna, a resident of Florida, was arrested Monday by federal agents in Dallas, where he made an initial court appearance Tuesday afternoon. He waived his right to a hearing to establish his identity and will remain in custody while awaiting a bail hearing Dec. 17.

Afterward, defense attorney Rose Romero declined to comment outside court.

Prosecutors in Brooklyn have said they will seek Garcia Luna’s removal to New York, where El Chapo faced trial in 2018. Jurors heard former cartel member Jesus Zambada testify that he personally made at least \$6 million in hidden payments to Garcia Luna, on behalf of his older brother, cartel boss Ismael “El Mayo” Zambada.

wounded but were later released from the hospital, authorities said.

The bullets started flying early in the afternoon in the city of about 270,000 people, situated across the Hudson River from New York City. Seals, who worked for a unit called Cease Fire, was shot around 12:30 p.m. The gunmen then traveled to another part of the city in a stolen rental van and engaged police in a protracted shootout.

“Our officers were under fire for hours,” the chief said.

Inside the grocery store, police found the bodies of what they believed were the two gunmen and three other people who apparently happened to be in the place when the assailants rushed in, authorities said. Police said they were confident that all those killed were shot by the gunmen and not by police.

The kosher grocery is a central fixture in a growing community of Orthodox Jews who have been moving to Jersey City in recent years. Authorities were unable to say why



Law enforcement personnel guard near the scene following a shooting, Tuesday, Dec. 10, 2019, in Jersey City, N.J. AP

the gunmen went there.

City Public Safety Director James Shea said that authorities believe the bloodshed was not an act of terrorism but that it was still under investigation.

The shooting spread fear through the neighborhood, and the nearby Sacred Heart School was put on lockdown as a precaution.

SWAT teams, state police and federal agents converged on the scene, and police blocked off the area, which in addition to the school and

supermarket included a hair salon and other shops. Dozens of bystanders pressed against the police barrier to capture the action on their cellphones, some whooping when bursts of fire could be heard.

Video shot by residents recorded loud volleys of gunfire reverberating along one of the city’s main streets and showed a long line of law enforcement officers pointing guns as they advanced, yelling to bystanders, “Clear the street! Get out of the way!”

“It’s like firecrackers go-

ing off,” said Andy Patel, who works at a liquor store about three blocks away. “They were shooting like crazy. ... The cops were clearing everyone off the streets.”

Seals had been on the Jersey City Police Department since 2006. In addition to his work with the illegal guns unit, he was cited for heroism in a Christmas Eve 2008 incident in which he and another officer burst through the window of a home and stopped a sexual assault that was being

carried out against a 41-year-old woman.

Seventh grader Zamir Butler said his class was coming back inside from the playground at Sacred Heart, which sits across the street from the grocery store, when he heard the shots. At first he thought they were thunder, since it had rained earlier. “Everybody was running up the stairs to get to safety in the classroom,” he said. “A few of the kids were crying. They told us to stay behind the wall and stay down.”

Democrats’ impeachment charges say Trump ‘betrayed’ US

WASHINGTON (AP)—House Democrats announced two articles of impeachment against President Donald Trump on Tuesday, declaring he “betrayed the nation” with his actions toward Ukraine as they pushed toward historic proceedings that are certain to help define his presidency and shape the 2020 election.

The specific charges aimed at removing the 45th president of the U.S.: Abuse of power and obstruction of Congress.

Speaker Nancy Pelosi, flanked by the chairmen of impeachment inquiry committees at the U.S. Capitol, said they were upholding their solemn oath to defend the Constitution. Trump responded angrily on Twitter: “WITCH HUNT!”

Voting is expected in a matter of days by the Judiciary Committee, which begins deliberations Wednesday, and by Christmas in the full House. The charges, if approved,

would then be sent to the Senate, where the Republican majority would be unlikely to convict Trump, but not without a potentially bitter trial just as voters in Iowa and other early presidential primary states begin making their choices.

In the formal articles announced Tuesday, the Democrats said Trump enlisted a foreign power in “corrupting” the U.S. election process and endangered national security by asking Ukraine to investigate his political rivals, including Democrat Joe Biden, while withholding U.S. military aid as leverage. That benefited Russia over the U.S. as America’s ally fought Russian aggression, the Democrats said.

Trump then obstructed Congress by ordering current and former officials to defy House subpoenas for testimony and by blocking access to documents, the charges say. By his conduct, Trump

“demonstrated he will remain a threat to national security and the Constitution if allowed to remain in office,” the nine-page impeachment resolution says.

“If we did not hold him accountable, he would continue to undermine our election,” Pelosi said later at a forum sponsored by Politico. “Nothing less is at stake than the central point of our democracy - a free and fair election.”

Trump tweeted that to impeach a president “who has done NOTHING wrong, is sheer Political Madness.”

He later headed to Pennsylvania for a reelection campaign rally, where he called the effort “impeachment lite” and promised it would lead to his reelection in 2020.

The outcome appears increasingly set as the House presses ahead toward impeachment as it has only three times in history against U.S. presi-

dents, a test of the nation’s system of checks and balances.

Democrats said they had a duty to act in what is now a strictly partisan undertaking, as Republicans stand with the president, because Trump has shown a pattern of behavior that, if left unchecked, poses risks to the democratic process.

Rep. Jerrold Nadler, D-N.Y., the Judiciary chairman, said the president “holds the ultimate public trust. When he betrays that trust and puts himself before country, he endangers the Constitution; he endangers our democracy; he endangers our national security.”

“No one, not even the president, is above the law,” he said, announcing the charges before a portrait of George Washington.

Chairman Adam Schiff of the Intelligence Committee said, “We stand here today because the president’s abuse of power leaves us with no choice.”

Asia

India's crackdown hits religious freedom in disputed Kashmir

SRINAGAR, India (AP)—For years Romi Jan's mornings would begin with the plaintive call to prayer that rang out from the central mosque in disputed Kashmir's largest city. The voice soothed her soul and made her feel closer to God.

Not anymore. For nearly

four months now, the voice that would call out five times a day from the minarets of the Jamia Masjid and echo across Srinagar has been silent, a result of India's ongoing security operations in this Muslim-majority region.

"The mosque closure is a relentless agony for me and

my family," Jan said. "I can't tolerate it, but I am helpless."

Already one of the most militarized places in the world, last summer India began pouring more troops into its side of Kashmir, which is divided between India and Pakistan and claimed by both in its entirety. It implemented

a security lockdown in which it pressed harsh curbs on civil rights, arrested thousands of people, blocked internet and phone service, and shuttered important mosques.

All of this was laying the groundwork for the Hindu nationalist-led government's Aug. 5 decision to strip Kash-

mir of its semiautonomous status and remove its statehood, moves it knew would be met with fury by Kashmiri Muslims, most of whom want independence or unification with Pakistan. The government said the restrictions were needed to head off anti-India protests and violence.

While some of the conditions have since been eased, some mosques and Muslim shrines in the region either remain shuttered or have had their access limited. Muslims say this is undermining their constitutional right to religious freedom and only deepening anti-India sentiment.

The centuries-old Jamia Masjid, made of brick and wood, is one of the oldest in this city of 1.2 million, where 96% of people are Muslim. When it's open, thousands of people congregate there for prayers.

Romi would take her two children there every day and

sit inside the compound while they would play.

"I would forget all my miseries there," she said.

Now, when her kids ask why they can't go to the mosque, she draws a blank face.

"I open my window of the house which faces the mosque and show my kids the soldiers that are stationed outside it," Romi said.

That it's a target for authorities is neither surprising nor new. Friday sermons at the mosque mainly revolve around the Kashmir conflict, and its surrounding neighborhoods are often where stone-throwing protesters clash with government forces as part of an ongoing anti-India rebellion.

Authorities have banned prayers at the mosque for extended periods during unrest in 2008, 2010 and 2016. Official data show the mosque was closed at least 250 days in those three years combined.



In this, Nov. 10, 2019 file photo, an Indian policeman guards as a Kashmiri child looks on outside the Hazratbal shrine, on the occasion of the Prophet's birth anniversary in Srinagar, India.

ASIAN BRIEFS

South Korea says North's recent test was of rocket engine

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—South Korea's defense minister said Tuesday that North Korea's recent unspecified test at a rocket liftoff site was of a rocket engine, amid speculation the North was making preliminary steps toward a prohibited long-range rocket launch. Defense Minister Jeong Kyeong-doo said during a visit to Sydney that Seoul expressed its "deep concerns" over the engine test and North Korea's recent ballistic missile launches into the sea, according to his office in Seoul. It was the first official outside assessment of what North Korea called "a very important test" at its Tongchang-ri rocket launch site. The North's Academy of National Defense Science said Sunday the test will have "an important effect on changing the strategic position" of North Korea. Jeong didn't elaborate on what the engine test was for but urged North Korea to stop "acts that escalate military tensions." Many experts say the reported test indicates North Korea is preparing to launch a satellite.

carrying rocket in a disguised test of long-range missile technology amid faltering U.S.-led diplomacy on ending the North Korean nuclear crisis. The diplomacy has been stalemated for months, with North Korea pressuring the United States to make concessions by year's end. North Korea has hinted at abandoning diplomacy and resuming nuclear and intercontinental ballistic missile tests, if the U.S. fails to meet that deadline.

Sydney choked by hazardous haze from Australia bush fires

SYDNEY (AP)—Wildfires engulfed the Australian city of Sydney on Tuesday in haze so thick in some places it was 11 times worse than the level considered "hazardous," and was apt to trigger fire alarms. The city canceled ferries and some offices in the downtown area were evacuated. Local health officials advised people to stay indoors as much as possible and those with heart and lung problems were told to avoid all outdoor activity. "The smoke here in Sydney is extremely bad today, it is some of the worst air quality we've seen," Richard Broome of

New South Wales Health told reporters. "We are just urging people once again to take these (conditions) seriously," Broome said. Ambulances have been answering dozens of respiratory-related calls a day, said the head of NSW Ambulance, Brent Armitage. Sydney Trains warned that fire alarms at train stations might be set off by the thick smoke drifting into the city from fires ringing Sydney. The regional environmental department said the air quality index, or AQI, in some parts of the city was more than 11 times the 200 reading considered hazardous. Given the dire air quality, workers should not be forced to toil on outdoor job sites while the haze persists, said Unions NSW's assistant secretary, Thomas Costa.

Japanese regulators recommend \$22M fine on Nissan

TOKYO (AP)—Japanese securities regulators are recommending that automaker Nissan be fined 2.4 billion yen (\$22 million) for under-reporting compensation for its former chairman, Carlos Ghosn. The watchdog, the Securities

and Exchange Surveillance Commission, said Tuesday it made the recommendation to the government's Financial Services Agency over disclosure documents from 2014 through 2017. Nissan Motor Co. said it accepted the penalty and had corrected its securities documents in May, although its final decision will come after it receives official notice. "The company takes this recommendation extremely seriously," it said in a statement. Nissan was charged earlier with under-reporting Ghosn's compensation. Companies are required to report the money they pay executives in annual statements to the securities exchange. The allegations involve money Ghosn could have received in the future after retirement. Ghosn was arrested in November 2018 and is out on bail. He has been charged with under-reporting his compensation and other financial misconduct. He says he is innocent and has said the future compensation was never agreed upon or paid. His trial has not yet started. Prosecutors say they are confident they have a case but won't disclose details.

Six deaths were confirmed after Monday's eruption. Five people died at the time of the blast or soon after, while a sixth person died Tuesday night at an Auckland hospital.

Another eight people are believed to have died, with their bodies remaining on the ash-covered island for now. And 30 people remain hospitalized, including 25 in critical condition. Many of the injured suffered severe burns.

Bruce Bird, an acting assistant police commissioner, said they were monitoring

Increased activity on NZ volcano stymies recovery

WHAKATANE, New Zealand

(AP)—Experts said geothermal activity on a New Zealand volcanic island increased significantly on Wednesday, dealing a blow to relatives waiting for crews to recover the bodies that remain there following a deadly eruption two days earlier.

Volcanic tremors rose in the morning, accompanied by an increase in the amount of steam and mud being released at White Island, the GeoNet seismic monitoring agency said.

"We interpret these signals as evidence of continued high gas pressures within the volcano," the agency said. "The situation remains highly uncertain as to future activity. Eruptions in the next 24 hours are still likely to occur."

Six deaths were confirmed after Monday's eruption. Five people died at the time of the blast or soon after, while a sixth person died Tuesday night at an Auckland hospital.

The tragedy will have an ongoing effect on the town of Whakatane, which road signs tout as the gateway to White Island. As well as being an important tourist draw for the 20,000 people who live here, the volcano has an almost mystical significance, its regular puffing a feature of the landscape.

Whether the island will ever host tourists again remains uncertain after the horrific tragedy that unfolded when the volcano exploded a little after 2 p.m. Monday.

the situation hour by hour.

"Safety for our staff is a huge priority for us," Bird said. "And we've got to get this right."

Bird said they had deployed a drone over the island to measure gas levels after strong winds had thwarted those attempts on Tuesday.

But helicopter pilot Mark Law said the delay was hard to understand and that if he was making the decision, he would leave immediately.

"It would take 20 minutes to get out there. We know where they are," he said, referring to the bodies. "Then we could bring them home."

Survivors from the Monday eruption ran into the sea to escape the scalding steam and ash and emerged covered in burns, said those who first helped them.

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World

Corruption allegations long dogged ex-Mexico security chief

MEXICO CITY (AP)—Mexico's former security chief was dogged by so many allegations of corruption and wrongdoing for so long that some said it was only a matter of time before he would be arrested.

What amazed some was that it took so long, and that Genaro García Luna's arrest this week came on U.S. soil rather than in Mexico.

García Luna, 51, who left the security post nearly a decade ago, was charged in federal court in New York with three counts of trafficking cocaine and one count of making false statements. He was arrested Monday outside Dallas and at his initial appearance Tuesday his bail hearing was set for Dec. 17. He moved to the U.S. in 2012 and has been living in Florida.

"This wasn't a surprise," said Samuel González, who served as Mexico's chief organized crime prosecutor in a prior administration. González said he turned down offers to work with García Luna in the 2000s, noting that "it wasn't a question of if, but rather when" García Luna would be charged.

García Luna was public safety secretary in President Felipe Calderon's Cabinet from 2006 to 2012, playing a key role in setting the government's security strategy during some of the worst and most embarrassing moments of bloody drug war that resulted



In this June 2, 2011 file photo, Mexico's Genaro García Luna speaks during a ceremony to designate June 2 as the Federal Police Day in Mexico City.

in the deaths of over 100,000 people and tens of thousands more missing.

As security chief he was widely feared and in charge of Mexico's federal police and the rest of the civilian security apparatus, giving him unrivaled access to intelligence about law enforcement operations and investigations that U.S. prosecutors say he shared with the Sinaloa cartel. Calde-

ron's administration was criticized at the time by many who argued it was not as aggressive against the Sinaloa cartel as it was against the gang's rivals.

Before joining Calderon's government, García Luna led Mexico's equivalent of the FBI, the Federal Investigative Agency, under President Vicente Fox.

Author José Reveles called García Luna "the omnipo-

tent cop of Vicente Fox and later Felipe Calderon," and the questions that have arisen about him are numerous.

Reveles said that in 2005, during the Fox administration, agents from the Federal Investigative Agency "were capturing Zetas (members of a

rival cartel) and turning them over to the Sinaloa cartel." Anti-drug prosecutor Santiago Vasconcelos made that accusation public, but later died in a plane crash.

In December of that year, García Luna's agents detained French citizen Florence Cas-

Bloomberg tells UN climate talks: You can count on the US

MADRID (AP)—New York billionaire and presidential candidate Michael Bloomberg led a high-powered charge against President Donald Trump's climate policies Tuesday, assuring activists, scientists and politicians from around the world that Americans are committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions "even with a climate change denier in the White House."

Bloomberg, who launched his 2020 campaign less than three weeks ago, spoke during a trip to the U.N. global climate conference in Madrid, even as the official U.S. delegation at a booth nearby kept a low profile.

Together with former Secretary of State John Kerry and former Vice President Al Gore, Bloomberg constituted a sort of shadow delegation at a time when Trump is moving to pull the United States out of the 2015 Paris climate accord.

As other Democratic candidates have done, Bloomberg

vowed to immediately rejoin the pact if elected president.

"The first thing you do, Day One, is you say we're going back in," he said. "That's a no-brainer."

The former New York mayor has helped support and fund a private push to get U.S. states, cities and businesses to abide by the terms of the Paris accord.

He touted a report that said non-federal actors representing more than two-thirds of the U.S. economy are on course to cut the nation's emissions 37% by 2030 compared with 2005 levels. If the next administration joins in, that figure could rise to 49%, bringing the U.S. roughly in line with the Paris treaty, according to the report.

By taking aim at fossil fuel subsidies, Bloomberg is challenging both a powerful American industry and Trump, who has championed the extraction of oil, gas and coal.

According to a report by the International Monetary Fund, fossil fuel subsidies in the U.S. amounted to \$649 billion in 2015. Only China spent more tax money—\$1.4 trillion—to keep fossil fuel prices low that year.

UK's Johnson pushes his Brexit message as election nears

LONDON (AP)—With two days until Britain's election, Prime Minister Boris Johnson's final push to drive home his key message about Brexit was overshadowed Tuesday by criticism of his ham-fisted response to the image of a sick child sleeping on a hospital floor and allegations that he exploited a terrorist knife attack for political gain.

Dave Merritt, whose son was killed in last month's London Bridge attack, said the way the tragedy had been exploited for political ends was "crass and insensitive."

He said the family had not been contacted by Johnson or his office since the attack, although Johnson's office said "the PM has expressed his deepest condolences to Mr. Merritt for his tragic loss - an experience no family should have to go through."

Johnson, meanwhile, tried to focus voters on the prospect of an uncertain result and a divided Parliament, which would endanger his plan to lead Britain out of the European Union on Jan. 31.

All 650 seats in the House of Commons seats are up for grabs in the election, which is being held more than

an opportunity."

"And it was just such an ill-considered intervention and almost like a knee-jerk reaction," he said. "I think he saw an opportunity to score some points in the election. They immediately said, 'Oh, this is Labour's fault - they allowed this to happen. They had this early release policy,' and so on."

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sez and held her illegally until they could stage a media event. She was paraded before TV cameras and forced to participate in a staged, televised reenactment of her capture. She was held for seven years on kidnapping charges, but was released and became a cause célèbre in her homeland.

In 2008, banners began appearing across the country claiming García Luna was working for the Sinaloa cartel.

Reveles, who was then covering the congress and had access to documents, said that in 2008 Mexican lawmakers took closed-door testimony from federal agents that García Luna's convoy had been intercepted in the state of Morelos by members of the Beltran Lleyva cartel, which had broken from the Sinaloa cartel. The agents reported that García Luna was taken to meet with Arturo Beltran Lleyva, one of the cartel's leaders, Reveles said. García Luna denied all of it.

A 2011 Televisa telenovela called "The Team" that portrayed federal police as crime-fighting heroes was allegedly the brainchild of García Luna and financed with government money. The honest, well-trained and brave officers portrayed on the show were at odds with the public's longstanding perception of Mexico's police.

two years early in a bid to break the political impasse over Brexit.

Opinion polls give the Conservatives a lead over Labour, but all parties are nervous about the verdict of a volatile electorate that is weary after years of wrangling over Brexit.

"Polls can be wrong," Johnson said Tuesday. "We need to be fighting for every vote."

He accuses Labour of offering more "dither and delay" on Brexit. The opposition party says it will negotiate a new divorce deal with the EU and then give voters a choice between leaving on those terms and remaining in the bloc.

"Forty-eight hours from now, our country can choose between going forward, punching through the current deadlock ... or we can remain stuck in neutral," Johnson said during a visit to a construction equipment factory in central England, where he drove a bulldozer through a plastic foam wall with "Gridlock" written on it.

Environment

Schmidt Ocean Institute maps 1M square km of seafloor

LONDON—Schmidt Ocean Institute has come together with The Nippon Foundation-GEBCO Seabed 2030 Project for the joint signing of a Memorandum of Understanding to share all of its collected mapping data with the project. According to the Seabed 2030 Project, about 32 million square kilometers or 15% of the ocean has been mapped. The million square kilometer milestone is a big one for Schmidt Ocean, accounting for 3% of this mapping contribution and the discovery of 14 new underwater features.

The groups met at the Royal Society, making Schmidt Ocean one of more than 100 organizations to formally support the initiative. Seabed 2030 is a global initiative aimed at creating a detailed, freely available map of the entire ocean floor by the year 2030. GEBCO (General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans) is the only organization with a mandate to map the ocean floor.

The organizations are working together to achieve high-resolution mapping that is needed in ocean science. In fact, Seabed 2030 is working closely with the recently announced United Nations Decade of Ocean Science initiative that will begin in 2021. "While mapping the entire ocean floor by 2030 seems like a daunting task, we are making headway thanks to the commitment of commercial, scientific and private vessels, including Schmidt Ocean Institute's R/V *Falkor*," said Seabed 2030 Director Jamie McMichael-Phillips.

Schmidt Ocean Institute brings unique value due to its focus on mapping remote regions that require high-resolution seafloor imagery to contribute to expansion or additional protections. Some of its large mapping efforts have focused on the Papahana-

mokuakea Marine National Monument in Hawaii, Cocos Island National Park in Costa Rica, and the Phoenix Islands Protected Area in Kiribati.

"Most people don't think

about the bottom of the ocean. When you look at a map, the ocean is portrayed as flat blue with very few features," said Schmidt Ocean Institute co-founder Wendy Schmidt.

"However, this couldn't be further from what the ocean floor looks like. Picture huge mountains and canyons, exotic hydrothermal vent forests and unique conditions that

mimic other planets. There are still so many things we do not know about the topography or the ecosystems that cover the largest part of our earth."

Gaining visuals of the ocean floor is critical to unlocking a better understanding of the world's oceans. There are predicted to be millions of unknown species whose function and contribution to ocean and human health is still unknown. High resolution maps guide scientists to these unexplored areas where further study and sampling can take place. "A high-resolution map of our seafloor will be an invaluable tool in protecting our oceans," says Schmidt.

"What is important is that these maps are open-source and available to anyone from any country," said Schmidt Ocean Operations Director Eric King. "This effort can only be achieved through co-operation and collaboration. Everyone who travels, explores, or uses our oceans has

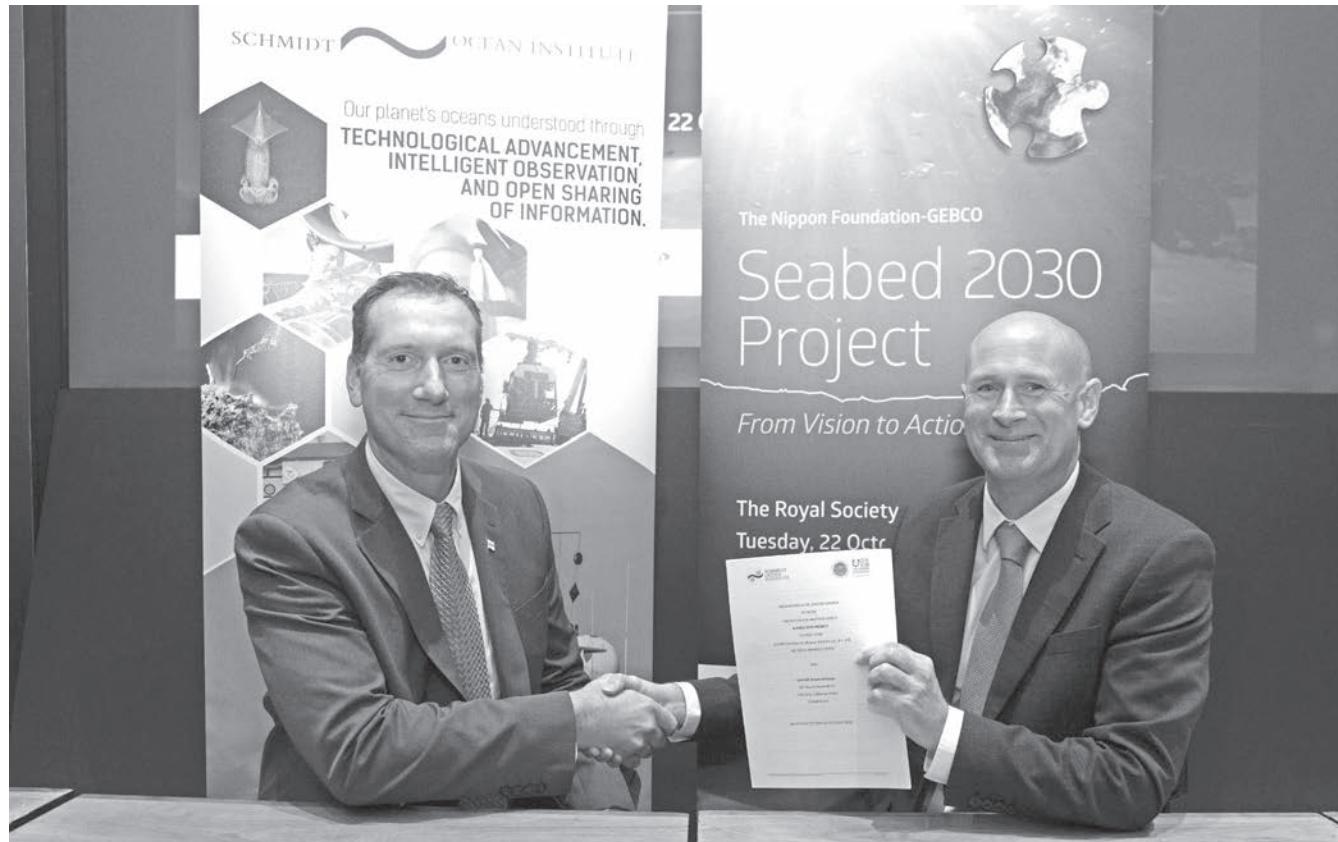
a role to play and can benefit from this initiative."

Schmidt Ocean Institute will provide mapping data, but has also setup dedicated mapping expeditions like "Mapping the Gaps" with its own research vessel *Falkor*, to help fill in the holes in previously collected mapping data. "Our organization is happy to see our data be a part of this collective initiative," says King. "I look forward to a day when we can see an image of a fully mapped ocean."

View a video about R/V *Falkor*'s mapping program & the Seabed 2030 initiative here. High resolution images and broll available upon request.

Schmidt Ocean Institute was created by Eric and Wendy Schmidt in 2009 to enable research that expands understanding of the world's ocean using advanced technology, intelligent observation, and the open sharing of information. Annually the organization invites select scientific teams from around the world to carry out collaborative oceanographic research and technology development aboard its 272-foot research vessel *Falkor*, launched in 2012. More information at www.schmidtocean.org.

The Nippon Foundation-GEBCO Seabed 2030 Project is a collaborative project between The Nippon Foundation and the General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans (GEBCO), with a vision to ensure that by 2030, the World's oceans are fully mapped. The freely available GEBCO Ocean Map will represent a complete map of the global ocean bathymetry. The project was launched at the United Nations (UN) Ocean Conference in June 2017 and is aligned with the UN's Sustainable Development Goal #14 to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources. For more information please visit <https://seabed2030.gebco.net/> or contact: Patrick Orr - Patrick@raittorr.co.uk / +44 (0) 20 7922 7713. (PR)



Schmidt Ocean Institute Director of Operations Eric King and The Nippon Foundation-GEBCO Seabed 2030 former acting director Graham Allen sign the Seabed 2030 Memorandum of Understanding at the Royal Society in London. Image credit: John Cobb/The Nippon Foundation-GEBCO Seabed 2030 Project.



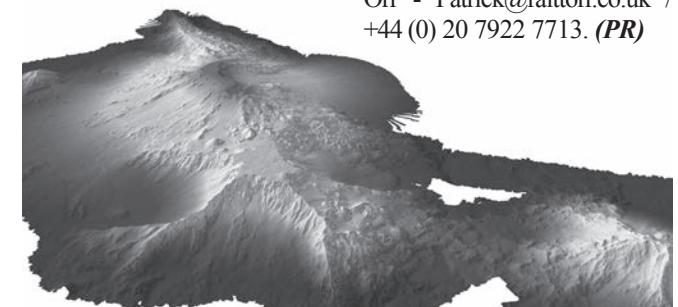
Scientists observe mapping details on R/V *Falkor* in the science control room.

WHAT WE FOUND 2013-2018



Graphic of the various seamounts and underwater features discovered by R/V *Falkor* since 2013.

SCHMIDT OCEAN INSTITUTE



SCHMIDT OCEAN INSTITUTE
Schmidt Seamount in the Papahanaumokuakea Marine National Monument named in honor of Schmidt Ocean Institute and R/V *Falkor*, which was used to map this seamount with multibeam sonar in 2014. Without this cruise and the data acquired, the unique dual Hawaiian and Cretaceous origin of this seamount would still be unknown.

Life & Style

Bill Cosby sex assault verdict upheld;

Bill Cosby lost his bid to overturn his sexual assault conviction Tuesday, as an appeals court upheld the verdict in the first celebrity trial of the #MeToo era.

In its ruling, the Superior

Court affirmed the right of prosecutors to call other accusers to bolster their case—the same issue fought over in movie mogul Harvey Weinstein's sexual assault trial, now set for Jan. 6.

"This decision is a reminder that no one is above the law," Andrea Constand, the victim in Cos-

by's case, said in a text message to The Associated Press on Tuesday.

Cosby's lawyers had complained that the judge had let five women testify at last year's retrial in suburban Philadelphia, although he had let just one woman testify at the first trial in 2017.

But the Superior Court said their testimony was evidence of Cosby's "unique sexual assault playbook" and undermined any claim that he "was unaware of or mistaken about victim's failure to consent."

The prosecutor who took the case to trial praised Con-

stand for inspiring other victims to come forward against powerful men. She went to police long before the #MeToo movement saw prominent men in entertainment, business, media and other fields brought down over their treatment of women (*AP*)

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Painting found inside gallery walls might be stolen Klimt

ROME (AP) — A Gustav Klimt painting, stolen almost 23 years ago, might have been hidden all this time inside an Italian gallery's walls. A gardener at the Ricci Oddi modern art gallery in the northern city of Piacenza told Italian state TV on Tuesday he was clearing ivy from the gallery's walls when he noticed a metal panel. He opened it and found a bag inside a space within the walls. When the bag was opened it contained a painting that might be Klimt's "Portrait of a Lady," which disappeared from the gallery during renovations in February 1997. Piacenza police chief Pietro Ostuni said the painting is being kept in a safe place that he wouldn't reveal while experts check to see if it's the real one or a copy. The gallery said it isn't saying anything publicly until the painting's authenticity can be checked out. But local online daily Piacenza Sera quoted gallery officials as saying on the back of the canvas were stamps that were placed there when the painting was on loan, indicating it might indeed be the missing portrait. The painting is a later work by the Austrian master of the "art nouveau." Its disappearance has been one of the art world's biggest mysteries.

Stormy Daniels' lawyers argue for timely lawyer-fee payments

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — A judge should grant attorney fees to lawyers who represented porn actress Stormy Daniels in a lawsuit against Ohio's capital city before competing claims on Daniels' \$450,000 settlement are dealt with, including a claim by President Donald Trump, Daniels' lawyers argued in a court filing. A federal judge last year said Daniels, whose real name is Stephanie Clifford, must pay Trump nearly \$293,000 for his attorneys' fees and another \$1,000 in sanctions after her defamation suit against him was dismissed. Columbus agreed this year to pay Daniels \$450,000 over her arrest at a strip club in 2018. In response, lawyers for Trump filed a motion in the court handling Daniels' settlement with the city of Columbus noting that Daniels owes the president \$293,052. Daniels' lawyers said competing claims for settlement dollars don't have an interest "superior to" their own, according to the filing. A claim for \$2 million was also made by Michael Avenatti, a lawyer who has previously represented Daniels, but that claim was later withdrawn, according to Monday's filing. Daniels' lawyers didn't say how much their fees would be.

Marie Fredriksson of Swedish pop duo Roxette dies at 61

STOCKHOLM (AP) — Marie Fredriksson, the female half of the Swedish pop duo Roxette, has died at age 61, her management agency said Tuesday.

Fredriksson formed Roxette with Per Gessle in 1986. The two released their first album the same year and went on to achieve international success in the late 1980s and 1990s with hits including "The Look" and "It Must Have Been Love."

The Dimberg Jernberg agency said Fredriksson died Monday "of the consequences of a long illness."

It "is with great sorrow that we must inform you that one of greatest and most-loved artists is gone," the firm said.

On his Facebook profile, Gessle wrote: "You were an outstanding musician, a master of the voice, an amazing performer."

"I'm proud, honored and happy to have been able to share so much of your time, talent, warmth, generosity and your sense of humour," he wrote in English, adding "Things will never be the same."

Fredriksson was diagnosed with a brain tumor in 2002. She underwent aggressive treatment that took its toll but ultimately was successful, her

management agency said. However, she was left blind in one eye, with limited hearing and mobility, and was unable to read or write. She was also unable to speak for a considerable period of time after her treatment. Over the years she was able to make a gradual return to the world stage

Fredriksson was born in



Fredriksson

southern Sweden on May 30, 1958, and had her artistic breakthrough in 1984 in Sweden. Two years later, she formed the duo Roxette with Gessle, and in 1989, the pair had their international breakthrough with "The Look."

They achieved international success with their albums "Look Sharp!" in 1988 and

"Joyride" in 1991, and had six top two hits on the Billboard Hot 100. The pair sold 80 million records worldwide and embarked on world tours.

They were Sweden's best-known band since ABBA in the 1970s and 1980s, and in 2003, Sweden's Carl Gustaf XVI awarded the duo a royal award. Fredriksson made her first public appearance after her brain tumor operation to receive the honor with Gessle.



NEW MONUMENT

The statue titled Rumors of War by artist Kehinde Wiley gets fully unveiled after the tarp covering the statue got stuck for a while at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in Richmond, Va., Tuesday, Dec. 10, 2019. The monumental bronze sculpture of a young black man astride a galloping horse was unveiled Tuesday, set to be permanently installed in Virginia's capital city, not far from the Confederate monument it mimics. AP

Hotheaded friend dunks man's toothbrush in toilet

DEAR ABBY: I have shared a friendship for 40 years with a woman who is known for having a quick temper. Although I have been on the receiving end of her anger many times, we manage to maintain our relationship.

She lives across the country now and, unfortunately, suffers from a major debilitating illness. She lives with a man she argues with often, in his small apartment. They struggle financially, and she recently confided that when they argue, she dunks his toothbrush in the toilet to get even. Obviously, it is without his knowledge.

I have never met him, but he is very nice to me when I call. I want to tell him what my friend has been doing. I feel he needs to know the health risks he's facing when he brushes his teeth.

Of course, if I do, I know I'll incur her wrath once again as she'll know I ratted her out. And he will undoubtedly evict her from the apartment. She doesn't have the finances to get her own place, and the eviction may result in her becoming homeless. I'm struggling with which is worse: his health risk or her homelessness.

So far, I have kept my mouth shut, but each day I know he is brushing his teeth with bacteria. Should I continue to remain silent?

YUCK FACTOR IN THE DESERT

DEAR YUCK FACTOR: While dipping his toothbrush in the toilet may not kill him, it could make him sick. Tell him what has been going on. If your friendship with the woman ends, so be it.

DEAR ABBY: I'm a 34-year-old single mother of a 7-year-old son who wants me to get married. I'm not dating anyone, so marriage is nowhere in the near future.

I know my son's wish for me to be married is due to the absence of his "father" in his life and his desire to have a dad. I have technically been single for more than 10 years. I dated a lot over the years but haven't during the last two years, instead focusing on my mental, emotional and physical well-being in addition to securing a decent career path, which I'm just a week into.

I have contemplated dating for months, even prior to my son saying anything. Being an only parent, I have very little free time, and dating can be very disappointing. I don't have time to waste. Should I get back out there for the sake of my son or not?

DATING FOR TWO IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR DATING: Should you date because your son wants a father? No. You should date because you meet someone whose values and interests are similar to your

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

own, someone you think is worth getting to know better.

You are starting a new career, and in time you will meet eligible men. In the meantime, because your son needs a masculine influence in his life, consider having him spend time with male family members. If that's not possible, contact Big Brothers Big Sisters of America and try to arrange a mentor for him. The website is bbbs.org.

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS and getting along with peers and parents is in "What Every Teen Should Know." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes



By Bill Watterson

Garfield®



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By Jim Davis



JIM DAVIS 12-12

Adam@home



By Bryan Basset

The Duplex



By Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	41 "A pox upon thee!"	61 Plant seeds	16 Three, on a sundial
1 Monk's title	42 Atty.'s title	20 PC port	21 Humdrum
4 Pear variety	44 Played miniature golf	22 Green land	23 London mist
8 Pager sound	46 Bit steeped in a bag	27 Shriek bark	29 Some boxing punches
12 High tennis shot	50 British rule of India	30 French cheese	31 Took to court
13 "Believe — not!"	51 Auction	32 Eternal	35 "Uh-huh"
14 Bruins' sch.	52 Hailed vehicles	33 Jargon suffix	38 Jargon suffix
15 Anise-flavored liqueur	56 Nile vipers	40 Stickler for details	43 Persian Gulf nation
17 Optimist's credo	57 Iowa city	45 Tic — toe	46 Despot
18 Suffix with human or fact	58 Large snake	47 Lighten	48 Dog food brand
19 Luxurious	59 Antique cars	49 Notoriety	50 Ballot marks
21 Conviction	60 Take five	53 Accommodating	54 Scary cry
24 Ballpark fig.		55 Contractually	56 Cutting tool
25 Actress Tyler			
26 Singer Orbison			
28 Potential tulips			
32 Region			
34 Festive			
36 Andean land			
37 Bet both ways			
39 Young seal			

Solution time: 24 mins.



Yesterday's answer 12-12

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Mayim Bialik, 44; Madchen Amick, 49; Regina Hall, 49; Jennifer Connelly, 49.

Happy Birthday: Evaluate your relationships, and be selective regarding who you have time for and who you should probably not see as much. Making the most of your time and being honest with yourself as well as others will make a difference to how much you gain moving forward. Put your needs and your plans first, and you will get positive results. Your numbers are 2, 12, 20, 26, 31, 38, 46.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Look beyond what's right in front of your nose. Refuse to let someone sidetrack you or put you in an awkward position. Speak up, make your thoughts and intentions known, and offer suggestions that implement overall compromise, and success will follow. ★★★★

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Make change count. Check your motives, decide what's best and choose the most cost-efficient way to get what you want. Strategic plans will make a difference in how things turn out. When in doubt, ask an expert. Romance is in the stars. ★★★

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): If you are too accommodating, someone will take advantage of you emotionally, financially or contractually. Do your due diligence before you sign papers or commit to someone. Let intelligence be your vehicle when making important decisions. ★★★

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Tie up loose ends, and plan to relax and mull over what you want to do to have fun. Make arrangements with someone you enjoy

being around, or sign up for something that stimulates your creative imagination. Romance is encouraged. ★★★

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Don't worry about what others are doing; concentrate on what you are doing. Gather information, test out a theory or sign up for something that interests you, but don't sit idle. Say no to pressure tactics and impulsive purchases. ★★★

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Refuse to let anyone railroad you into something that isn't right for you. Open your eyes, do your own thing and make positive personal changes that will improve your life. Look at trends and jump on board. Romance is in the stars. ★★★★

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Take a mental, emotional or physical trip that will lead to information that will help you make a decision. Stop letting others decide for you. Use your voice to get what you want. Walk away from situations that are confining or unhealthy. ★★★★★

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Dream on. Let your imagination entertain you and encourage you to branch out in directions that excite you. Embrace friendships with people who inspire you to try something new, and offer alternative options to put your talents to good use. ★★★

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Express your thoughts, feelings, likes and dislikes. Being on the same page as someone you spend a lot of time with will help you combine your needs and encourage higher personal growth and happiness. Honesty must prevail. ★★★

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): A particular change you make will improve your health and your appearance. Reach out to someone you don't see often, and something that makes you happy will develop. An unusual find will be a surprise. ★★★

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Make plans to do things with youngsters or to bring a little cheer to someone who doesn't get out much. Don't let the changes others make anger you. Go about your business, and do what matters to you most. ★★★★★

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Be honest about the way you feel and what you want to happen. Take control, and be willing to put in the time and energy to get things done. Helping others will be the greatest gift you can offer. ★★

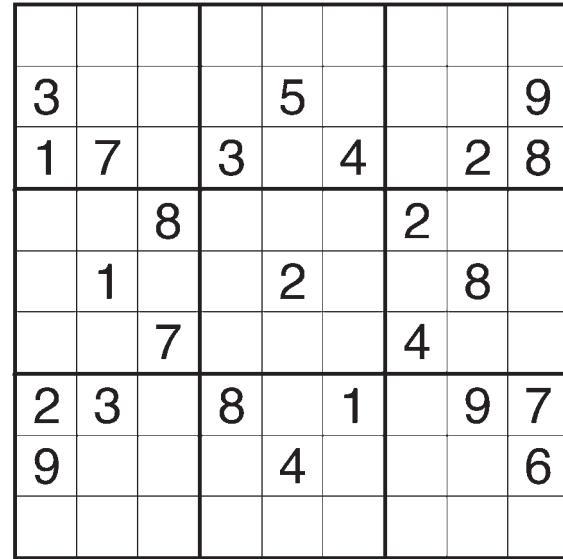
Birthday Baby: You are imaginative, emotional and heroic. You are steadfast and possessive.

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

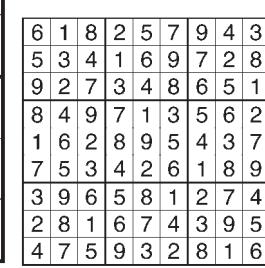
By Dave Green



Difficulty Level ★★★

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer



12/12

Difficulty Level ***

WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUVELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

DOING THE SAMBA

Solution: 9 letters

S	H	O	U	L	D	E	R	S	E	L	F	F	U	R
Y	L	E	V	I	L	E	S	S	O	N	R	U	T	T
G	S	E	P	Y	T	A	S	G	N	O	S	M	S	A
R	H	A	K	R	O	W	T	O	O	F	P	U	A	E
E	R	E	H	E	A	D	P	I	E	C	E	S	L	P
N	Y	A	W	S	E	Q	U	I	N	A	T	I	E	E
E	S	S	E	R	D	O	L	O	S	C	S	C	G	R
E	L	K	N	A	R	A	I	R	T	N	T	S	H	
S	A	T	L	O	V	S	E	S	G	U	S	N	B	Y
E	V	A	E	G	S	H	T	B	O	Ⓐ	S	U	T	T
D	I	C	N	U	T	E	B	Ⓕ	A	M	O	W	H	
A	T	I	C	A	M	C	E	C	P	R	C	I	M	
R	S	R	E	E	N	D	U	E	T	S	A	P	S	I
A	E	F	B	A	L	L	R	O	O	M	S	T	T	C
P	F	A	D	L	I	Z	A	R	B	I	K	I	N	I

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Africa, Ankle, Arms, Ballroom, Beads, Bikini, Bota Fogos, Bounce, Brazil, Costume, Count, Dance, Dress, Duet, Energy, Fast, Feathers, Festival, Footwork, Headpiece, Hips, Last, Latin, Legs, Lesson, Lively, Music, Pace, Parade, Percussion, Rapid, Repeat, Rhythmic, Ruffles, Sequin, Shoulders, Sing, Solo, Songs, Steps, Sway, Torso, Turn, Twist, Types, Voltas
Yesterday's Answer: Punctual
Treasuries 13 through 18 and 20 through 38 can be purchased online in time for the holidays at WonderWordBooks.com or call 1-800-642-6480.

STUMPED?

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NOTICE OF DISSOLUTION

Notice is hereby given that the Articles of Dissolution of C L B Corporation, a corporation established and operating in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, has been filed with the CNMI Registrar of Corporation on this 10th day of December, 2019. Pursuant thereto, all creditors and persons with claim against the corporation are hereby notified to present their respective claim in writing to the corporation at the address set forth below:

C L B Corporation
P.O. Box 503609
Saipan, MP 96950

All claims not filed within the time required by law will forever be barred.

/s/ Chen, Hongchao
Secretary



NORTHERN MARIANAS
HOUSING CORPORATION

P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhcgov.mp | Website: <http://www.nmhc.gov.mp>
Tel: (670) 234-6866, 234-9447, 234-7689, 234-7670
Fax: (670) 234-9021

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

(This ad is paid for by NMHC with HUD funds.)
PROPOSAL SUBMISSION DATE: January 07, 2019*** TIME: 10:00 AM

"AMENDMENT"
NMHC RFP 2020-001

Conduct and Prepare the Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

Proposal package will be available on November 13, 2019, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, during regular working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday thru Friday except CNMI holidays or you may obtain the proposal package online at www.nmhcgov.net "Public Notice/Announcements" subtitle "Request for Proposal".

The provisions of the CNMI Procurement regulations, NMIAC 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 Prohibiting Gratuities, Kickbacks and Contingent Fees shall apply.

A Mandatory Pre-Proposal Conference will be held at 10:00 a.m. on December 4, 2019 December 19, 2019, at the NMHC Central Office Conference Room in Garapan. Failure to attend the Mandatory pre-proposal conference will be considered a non-responsive bidder.

For more information, contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager/Procurement Officer, at (670)234-6866/7689; (670)483-9447; or email at officemanager@nmhcgov.net during regular business hours, 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

/s/
Kimo M. Rosario
Acting Chairman of the Board

/s/ Francisco C. Aguon
Acting Director
Division of Procurement & Supply

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Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

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Yanks land Cole in record \$324M, 9-year deal



SAN DIEGO

(AP)—The New York Yankees landed the biggest prize of the free agent market, adding Gerrit Cole to their rotation with a record \$324 million, nine-year contract on Tuesday night, a person familiar with the deal told The Associated Press.

The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the agreement had not been announced.

Cole's deal established marks for pitchers in total dollars, topping the \$245 million, seven-year contract Stephen Strasburg finalized a day earlier to remain with the World Series champion Washington Nationals.

Its \$36 million average is a record for any player, beating the \$35.5 million in outfielder Mike Trout's \$426.5 million, 12-year deal with the Los Angeles Angels that started last season.

Agent Scott Boras negotiated the deals for Cole and Strasburg.

A 29-year-old right-hander, Cole was baseball's most dominant pitcher for much of 2019 and helped the Houston Astros come within one win of their second World Series title in three seasons.

"Obviously, when you are talking about a player at the level of Gerrit Cole, in a lot of ways that's a game-changing type talent," Yankees manager Aaron Boone said earlier in the day. "This is a guy that's really hungry, really driven."

New York has not won the World Series since 2009 and sought an ace to head a rotation that already includes Luis Severino, Masahiro Tanaka, James Paxton and J.A. Happ or Domingo German, who may be suspended at the season's start under baseball's domestic violence policy.

General manager Brian Cashman executed the move out of his same playbook he used after the 2008 season, when he gave CC Sabathia a \$161 million, seven-year deal to lead a staff and establish a clubhouse presence.

Cole will compliment a young core of hitters that includes Aaron Judge, Gleyber Torres and Gary Sanchez, entering a window when New York thinks it can compete consistently for championships.

Cole was drafted by the Yankees in the first round with the 28th overall pick out of high school in 2008 but chose to go to UCLA, then was drafted first overall by Pittsburgh three years later. Traded after the 2017 season, he transformed his career in two seasons with the Astros.



AP

Houston Astros starting pitcher Gerrit Cole reacts after striking out Washington Nationals' Juan Soto during the first inning of Game 1 of the World Series Tuesday, Oct. 22, 2019, in Houston.

could slide over to an other infield position.

Gregorius, who turns 30 in February, famously took over for Derek Jeter as the New York Yankees shortstop when the future Hall of Famer retired following the 2014 season. His offensive numbers in the Bronx steadily improved during the subsequent seasons, culminating with a career year in 2018, when he posted 27 home runs and 86 RBIs before blowing out his elbow in the ALDS.

In 82 games with the Yankees last season, Gregorius managed a .238 average with 16 homers and 61 RBIs while seeing his strikeout rate rise and walk rate dip compared to 2018. New York opted not to make him a \$17.8 million qualifying offer, sending him to free agency.

Nats keep Gomes, Kendrick

Doing their best to keep as much of their World Series roster intact as possible, the Washington Nationals announced they re-signed catcher Yan Gomes and infielder Howie Kendrick on Tuesday, a day after bringing back Stephen Strasburg for \$245 million.

Gomes agreed to a \$10 million, two-year contract with salaries of \$4 million next year and \$6 million in 2021. Kendrick is guaranteed \$6.25 million under a deal that includes a \$4 million salary next year and a \$6.5 million mutual option for 2021 with a \$2.25 million buyout.

The 32-year-old Gomes split catching duties in 2019 with Kurt Suzuki and hit .223 with 12 homers and 43 RBI in his first season in Washington.

Kendrick, 36, batted .344 with 17 home runs and 62 RBI during the regular season, then was a major reason the Nationals won the franchise's first championship. He is expected to spend time at first base and second base next season.

He hit a grand slam in the 10th inning of Washington's Game 5 victory of the NL Division Series against the Los Angeles Dodgers, earned MVP honors in the NL Championship Series sweep of the St. Louis Cardinals, and delivered a go-ahead two-run shot in the seventh inning of Game 7 of the World Series against the Houston Astros.

After going 59-42 with a 3.50 ERA in five seasons with the Pirates, he blossomed under the analytics-focused staff of the Astros. He increased the usage of his four-seam fastball and curveball, virtually dropping his two-seam sinker while attacking the top of the strike zone more often.

"We're just trying to make sure that we educate the player and his family about our culture, everything, what we are," Cashman said.

Cashman said he realized the risk of a lengthy, market-place-driven free agent contract. Outfielder Jacoby Ellsbury, who missed the last two seasons because of injuries, was released this month with one guaranteed season left in a \$153 million, seven-year contract.

But Cashman pointed to

deals that worked, such as Derek Jeter's \$189 million contract that covered 2001-10, pitcher Mike Mussina's \$88.5 million agreement from 2001-06 and Sabathia's big deal.

"Clearly the longer the deals, the more risk you have," he said. "There's been examples where we've done long long-term deals and it's backfired and hasn't paid off. We've done long-term deals where we've had benefits."

Gregorius to Phillies

Didi Gregorius, the best shortstop available on the market this winter, has reportedly agreed to terms on a one-year contract with the Philadelphia Phillies, according to Joel Sherman of the New York

Post. He'll be paid \$14 million in 2020, per Jim Salisbury of NBC Sports Philadelphia.

The left-handed hitter, who missed the first half of 2019 while recovering from Tommy John surgery on his elbow, brings an above-average bat for his position to the Phillies, who finished 81-81 and failed to make the playoffs after an expensive offseason. The move reunites Gregorius with his former Yankees manager Joe Girardi, who was recently hired as Phillies skipper.

The move could mean something else is coming—either a position change or a trade. Jean Segura played shortstop last year for the Phillies, so he could either get dealt or one of them

their hands.

"So I know there's still going to be questions. I hope there's a day where I'm able to answer more questions, but I know today's not that day. I know it will disappoint some people."

Hinch deflected again and again. He was asked about the possible tarnishing of Houston's legacy, its effect on the team's pursuit of free agents, his potential punishment, and his comments this postseason that sign-stealing suspicions were "kind of funny."

No comment on any of it.

At one point, he cut off a reporter for even using the I-word.

Hinch working with MLB on sign steal probe, mum on details

SAN DIEGO (AP)—AJ Hinch leaned into a microphone and looked up at one of the deepest gaggles of reporters yet at this week's bustling baseball winter meetings.

"Not sure I've ever been so popular," the Houston Astros manager joked.

Then he moved onto "the elephant in the room."

Hinch said Tuesday he is eager to tell his side of the story regarding allegations Houston used electronics to steal signs en route to a 2017 World Series championship,

but he is going to let Major League Baseball talk first. He declined to comment on

MLB's investigation, saying he was instructed not to discuss the matter until the probe concludes.

"If I was in your shoes, I would be on the other side of this table," Hinch said. "And I would want to ask questions and find answers and get some more information on the investigation and all the allegations and things like that."

"I know you're probably expecting this, but I can't comment on it. It is an ongoing investigation."

Mike Fiers, a right-hander for the 2017 Astros who left in free agency after the season, told The Athletic last

month that Houston used outfield cameras to peak at catchers signs and banged on a garbage bin in the dugout tunnel to convey that info to hitters. MLB has been investigating, and punishment could be severe and widespread if the allegations are confirmed.

Hinch said he has been in regular contact with MLB during the inquiry.

"I've committed my time and energy to cooperate with MLB," Hinch said. "I've talked to them a couple times, and we continue to work with them as they navigate the investigation, and now we're waiting with everything in

Heat use late 22-0 run to top Hawks in OT



MIAMI (AP)—Trae Young figured the game was over.

Turns out, Jimmy Butler and the Miami Heat were just getting started—on one of the craziest stat nights in team history.

Duncan Robinson tied a franchise record with 10 3-pointers, Butler and Bam Adebayo each had triple-doubles and the Heat went on a wild late flurry to beat the Atlanta Hawks 135-121 in overtime on Tuesday night.

The Heat were down by six with 59 seconds left in regulation, the moment when Young took a celebratory walk back to the Atlanta bench for a timeout—with Butler hearing him shout, “It’s over.”

Miami scored the next 22 points, the last six of regulation and then the first 16 of overtime to improve to 18-6 overall and 11-0 at home.

“I don’t think anybody really thought the Heat were relevant,” Adebayo said. “We’re making people watch us.”

Kendrick Nunn scored a career-high 36 points, one off the Heat rookie single-game record. Robinson scored 34, a career high. Adebayo finished with a career-high 30 points, 11 rebounds and 11 assists. Butler had 20 points, a career-high 18 rebounds and 10 assists.

And afterward, Butler couldn’t resist a little jab at Young on Instagram—a post that other NBA players like Draymond Green and Klay Thompson quickly noticed.

“Everybody in this locker room has a confidence that they’re the best player on the floor at any given time,” Butler said. “Man, when you’ve got guys who think like that,

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)—Tiger Woods deferred the first pick for pairings in the Presidents Cup, and then made sure he was in the opening match Thursday against the Australian who led qualifying for the International team at Royal Melbourne.

Woods is the first playing captain since Hale Irwin in the inaugural Presidents Cup in 1994, and first captain to be pick himself with a wild-card selection after winning in Japan for his 82nd career PGA Tour victory.

Woods said Steve Stricker, one of his three assistants, would serve as captain while he was playing. Stricker was the U.S. captain at the 2017 Presidents Cup.

The Americans are defending champions and had the first pick who they wanted for the first of five fourballs matches. Instead, Woods let International captain Ernie

nothing’s ever over.”

It was the NBA’s widest margin of victory in an overtime game since Oct. 31, 2009, when Philadelphia beat New York 141-127.

De’Andre Hunter scored 28 points, and Young added 21 points and nine assists for Atlanta—which fell to 0-3 against the Heat this season.

“What’s tough is Robinson goes 10 for 14, a career high, two guys with triple-doubles, they played out of their minds a little bit with a couple guys and we still had a six-point lead with under a minute to go,” Hawks coach Lloyd Pierce said. “I feel bad.”

Vince Carter, in the 1,500th regular-season game of his career, scored 12 for the Hawks. Jabari Parker had 16 points and Cam Reddish added 12 for Atlanta.

The Hawks used a 13-0 run to take an eight-point lead early in the fourth, before the Heat clawed back and eventually tied the game at 111-111 on a 3-pointer by Robinson with 3:11 left.

Atlanta scored the next four to reclaim the lead, Butler missed a pair of free throws with 1:18 left and Alex Len had a dunk on the next Hawks possession for a 117-111 lead.

The rest was all Heat.

76ers 97, Nuggets 92

In Philadelphia, Joel Embiid scored 22 points, including two key free throws with 15.3 seconds left, and Tobias Harris added 20 as the 76ers beat Denver.

Matisse Thybulle added 13 points for the Sixers, who are 13-0 in Philadelphia. They have won three straight and seven of eight.

Will Barton had 26 points to lead the Nuggets, who have



lost three in a row and five of six. Leading scorer Jamal Murray was injured with 6:49 left in the first quarter when he collided with Ben Simmons

and didn’t return.

Hornets 114, Wizards 107

In Charlotte, Devonte Gra-

ham scored 29 points, Miles Bridges hit a big 3-pointer with 7.7 seconds left and the Hornets beat Washington in a game that featured

AP Miami Heat forward Jimmy Butler, center, shoots over Atlanta Hawks’ Allen Crabbe, left, and Trae Young during the second half of an NBA game, Tuesday, Dec. 10, 2019, in Miami.

20 lead changes.

Terry Rozier scored 17 points, Bridges had 16, P.J. Washington added 15 and Cody Zeller and Bismack Biyombo both had double-doubles as Charlotte wrapped up a five-game homestand with a 2/3 record.

David Bertans scored a career-high 32 points and made eight 3-pointers for Washington. Rui Hachimura added 18 points and 12 rebounds for the Wizards.

Trail Blazers 115, Knicks 87

In Portland, Damian Lillard had 31 points, including eight 3-pointers, and the Trail Blazers handed New York its 10th straight loss.

Hassan Whiteside added 17 points and 15 rebounds, and the Trail Blazers ended a two-game skid. Portland led by as many as 32.

Julius Randle had 15 points for the Knicks, who have won just four games, fewest in the NBA.

The Knicks opened their four-game West Coast trip in disarray after coach David Fizdale was fired on Friday, just hours after he ran practice. Mike Miller was named interim coach, and New York lost 104-103 at home to Indiana the next night.

In Portland, New York faced Carmelo Anthony, who played for the Knicks from 2011-17. Anthony finished with 16 points.

Els said he first unveiled the new look to players at the 2018 U.S. Open at Shinnecock and received favorable reviews.

The flag is a nice touch. The Solheim Cup on the LPGA Tour once put the flag of players’ home state on the golf bags. What makes this logo more meaningful is the shield in the background.

Abraham Ancer of Mexico said it was inspired by three patterns. The first one is the Celtic knot, which stands for unity (or friendship), loyalty and faith. The second is a coat of arms to represent strength. The last one is a pair of flag sticks in opposite directions to bring golf into the equation.

“It’s brilliant,” said Louis Oosthuizen, who played three Presidents Cup matches under the old flag. “We need to get that identity of what we are and what we are playing for and who we are as a team.”

Captain Woods sends himself out in 1st Presidents Cup match

Els start, and Els sent out Marc Leishman with Joaquin Niemann of Chile, one of a record-tying seven rookies on his team.

Patrick Reed, the subject of so much conversation this week from his rules violation in the Bahamas last week, is in the fourth spot with Webb Simpson. They play Hideki Matsuyama and C.T. Pan.

All five of the U.S. partnerships are new for a Presidents Cup or a Ryder Cup.

Dustin Johnson, who competes for the first time since Aug. 25 at the Tour Championship, has played with Matt Kuchar in various team events. This time he will have Presidents Cup newcomer Gary Woodland, giving the U.S. a big-hitting team on the short, fast track of Royal Melbourne.

They will face Abraham Ancer and Louis Oosthuizen.

In the other matches, Xander Schauffele and Patrick Cantlay give the Americans an all-rookie team against Adam Hadwin and Sungjae Im, while Bryson DeChambeau and Tony Finau face Adam Scott and Byeong Hun An.

Woods opted to sit out Matt Kuchar and Rickie Fowler, the last addition to the U.S. team when Brooks Koepka had to withdraw with a knee injury. Els left out Li Haotong and Cameron Smith, one of three Aussies on the International team.

Friday’s second session features five foursomes matches, with four matches of each format on Saturday and 12 singles matches on Sunday.

Key for the International team is a strong start. The Americans have dominated

this event, winning 10 out of 12 times and tying one event in South Africa. More telling of the one-sided nature of these matches is that the Americans have not trailed after any session since the second day in 2005.

“Whoever is out there, it’s the most important match of the week for them,” Scott said. “We have to get off to a good start—as long as we can hang with them. Tomorrow is not super important, but our team doesn’t need to be chasing its tail out here. We don’t need to be mounting a huge comeback.”

Meanwhile, captains for the Presidents Cup usually get the most attention for the wild-card picks that fill out their teams and the pairings they create. Els might have done his best work long before that point.

The Presidents Cup is a PGA Tour creation, and so it was the PGA Tour that created a flag for an International team representing countries from everywhere but Europe. It had wavy blue and gold lines. What it lacked was history, and a sense of identity.

Els changed all that.

The International team now has its own logo, which is more of a shield. The identity comes from each player having the flag from his own country in the middle of the shield—nine flags for this team, the most ever in 25 years.

“We’ve always played under the flag, but we’ve never really had our own identity, so to speak,” Els said. “Guys like that.... I explained to them exactly what it entails, what’s behind the whole thinking of how we brought the whole thing together.”

Belichick denies knowledge of ‘Spygate’ 2.0

LOS ANGELES—New England Patriots coach Bill Belichick said Tuesday he had no involvement with a video crew caught filming footage of the Cincinnati Bengals' sideline last weekend.

The Patriots came under scrutiny on Monday after it emerged a camera crew from the Super Bowl champions was found improperly filming the Bengals in their NFL game at Cleveland on Sunday.

The incident has revived memories of the 2007 “Spygate” scandal, when Belichick was fined \$500,000 after the Patriots were caught filming footage of the Green Bay Packers and New York Jets.

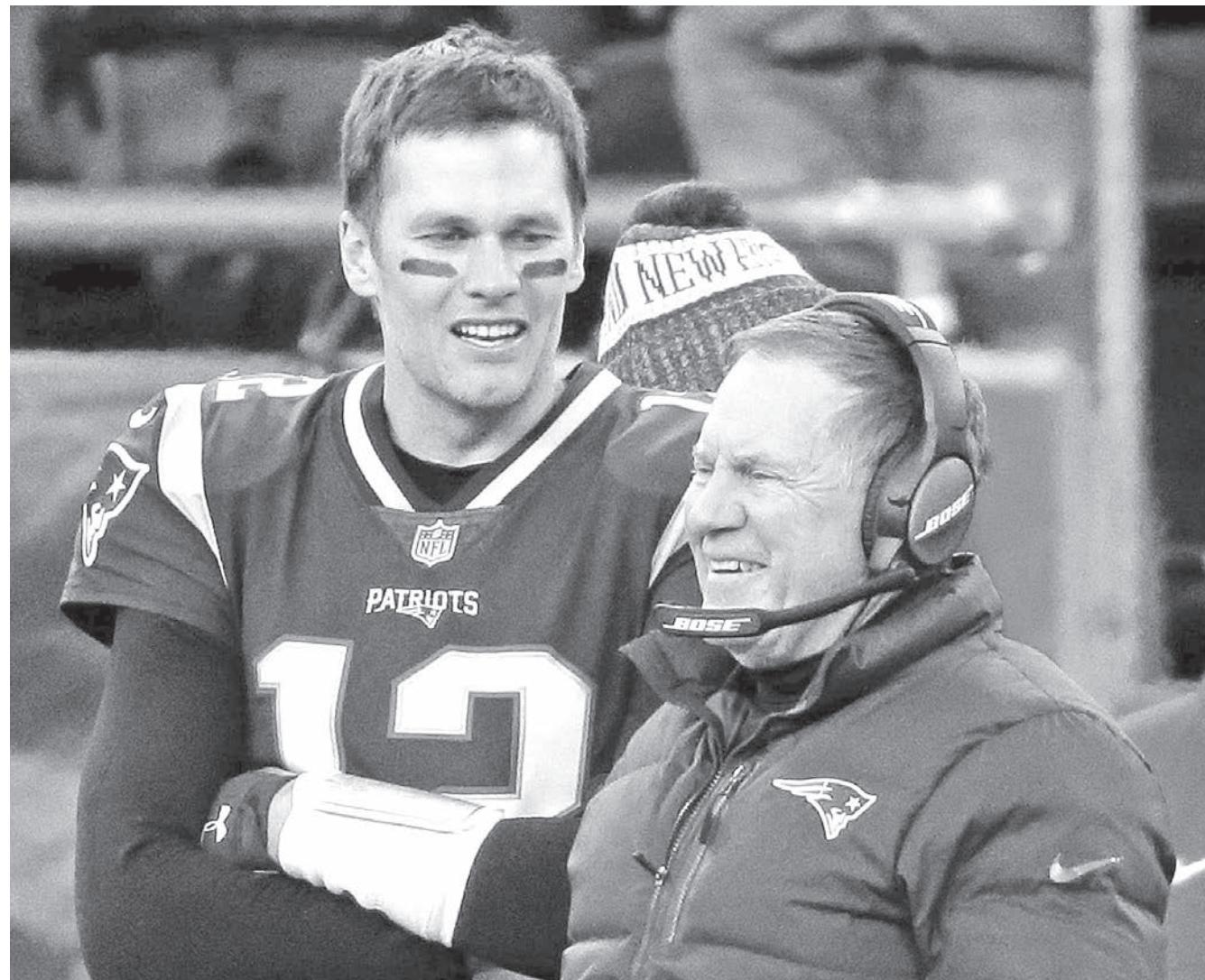
The Patriots, who face the Bengals next Sunday, issued a statement late Monday saying the three-person video crew had been sent to Cleveland on Sunday to obtain footage for a behind-the-scenes feature about team scouts.

According to sources who have viewed the tape, it shows about eight minutes of data focusing on recording the Bengals' sideline. It's a direct view of the sideline as players run on and off the field and coaches make signals for plays.

Bengals head coach Zac Taylor confirmed Monday the NFL is investigating the Patriots for having a film crew at Sunday's game.

The Patriots admitted the crew had filmed “inappropriate” footage from the press box, but denied any deliberate wrongdoing.

“The sole purpose of the filming was to provide an illustration of an advance scout at work on the road,” the Patriots said, adding that the crew



In this Dec. 30, 2018 file photo, New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady left and head coach Bill Belichick speak on the sideline during the fourth quarter of an NFL game against the New York Jets in Foxborough. AP

had immediately turned over all footage to the league.

Speaking to reporters on Tuesday, Belichick said he “didn't have anything at all to do with this” following the camera crew revelation.

Belichick added that since “Spygate” erupted, the team had always erred on the side of caution.

“We're competitive and we'll try to be competitive in every area,” Belichick said. “But we don't knowingly, intentionally want to do anything that's across the line.”

“Since (Spygate) happened, I'd say we've tried to keep a

good distance behind the line and not maybe take it as far as we would might have in the past. But it's never really fundamentally changed there.”

In Spygate, the NFL also fined the Patriots \$250,000 and docked the team their first-round draft pick in 2008.

Severe sanctions are not expected this time, with a resolution of the NFL's investigation possible by the end of the week.

Salary cap could top \$200M

The NFL salary cap for 2020 is projected to be in the range of \$196.8 million to \$201.2

million, making it likely for the cap to have an increase of at least \$10 million for the seventh consecutive year.

The 2019 salary cap is at \$188.2 million. If the cap tops \$200 million for the first time, it will have grown by roughly 40% since 2015, when it was at \$143.3 million.

Clubs were given the estimate Tuesday for the final season of the current collective bargaining agreement as NFL owners gathered for meetings in the Dallas area. Negotiations on a new labor deal were expected to be among the topics for owners to discuss.

The updated salary cap figure is released when free agency opens along with the official new league year each March. The cap was \$120.4 million in the first year of the labor deal in 2011. The cap has increased roughly 65% since then.

Meanwhile, nine athletes from eight countries will compete for a spot in the NFL's International Player Pathway Program for 2020.

Started in 2017, the program's goal is to provide international athletes the opportunity to compete at the NFL level and earn a spot on an NFL roster.

Past members of the pro-

gram who appeared in NFL games this season include fullback Jakob Johnson with the Patriots and defensive end Efe Obada with the Panthers.

The league has identified athletes from eight countries who will compete for a place in the program. The NFL also widened its search for international talent, hosting a combine in Germany in October with players from 18 countries participating.

Isaac Alarcon (Mexico), Otavio Amorim (Brazil), David Bada (Germany), Leo Kraft (Norway), Boqiao Li (China), Chris Mulumba (Finland), Sandro Platzgummer (Austria), Antoni Podgorski (Poland) and Bernhard Seikovits (Austria) will begin training in the United States next month. They will have the opportunity to showcase their talents to NFL club scouts in March in hopes of being signed as a free agent or being selected for practice squads for next season through the program.

One of the NFL's eight divisions, chosen at random, will receive the international players selected for the 2020 program if none is signed to a free agent contract.

At the end of training camp, each player will be eligible for an international player practice squad exemption with his assigned team. This provides the assigned team an 11th practice squad member who is ineligible to be activated during the season.

NEW YORK (AP)—Lamar Jackson and the Baltimore Ravens just keep on soaring.

The Ravens clinched a playoff spot last week after they held off the Buffalo Bills 24-17 for their ninth consecutive victory.

And the Ravens are again the unanimous choice as the top team in the latest AP Pro32 poll.

For the second consecutive week, the Ravens earned all 12 first-place votes for 384 points in balloting Tuesday by media members who regularly cover the NFL.

“The road to the AFC championship goes through Baltimore, as the Ravens win a slugfest over the Bills to maintain control of the No. 1 seed. Lamar Jackson to the Super Bowl in Year 2? Could be,” said Newsday's Bob Glauber.

Ravens, 49ers, and Saints in Top 3 of poll

it counted,” Kaufman said.

The Seattle Seahawks dropped two places to No. 4 after their 28-12 loss to the Los Angeles Rams. The Rams gained two spots to round out the top 10 and became the third team from the NFC West in the first third of the poll.

For the second week in a row, the Kansas City Chiefs are tied in the poll. This time, the Chiefs moved up two places, joining Seattle at No. 4, after holding off the New England Patriots 23-16 to clinch the AFC West. The Patriots dropped two spots No. 7 after their second consecutive loss.

The Green Bay Packers, tied with the Chiefs last week, remained at No. 6 after topping the Washington Redskins 20-15.

The Minnesota Vikings jumped two spots to No. 8 after topping the Detroit Lions.

And the Bills stayed at No. 9 after their loss to the Ravens.

The Bills play another high-profile AFC North team when they head to Pittsburgh for a rare appearance on “Sunday Night Football.”

Jackson shrugs off leg injury

Meanwhile, setting NFL records and garnering MVP votes doesn't mean that much to Ravens quarterback Lamar Jackson, who's far more interested in stacking wins and getting Baltimore to the Super Bowl.

Jackson stands 23 yards

shy of breaking Michael Vick's single-season record for yards rushing by a quar-

terback (1,039 in 2006). Although Jackson is practicing this week with a sore quadriceps, his motivation to play Thursday night against the New York Jets has nothing to do with personal glory.

“I'm planning to win the game,” Jackson said Tuesday. “If I've got to be out there all four quarters, that's what it's going to be.”

Jackson was struck in the leg on Sunday while throwing a 61-yard touchdown pass to tight end Hayden Hurst, a key play in a 24-17 victory over Buffalo that extended Baltimore's winning streak to nine games and put the Ravens (11-2) on track to finish with the No. 1 seed in the AFC playoffs.

That hit in the pocket did

nothing to slow Jackson's sprint to the end zone to share the occasion with Hurst.

“I was celebrating. It was 100 percent worth it,” said Jackson, who made it clear that the injury is nothing to worry about.

“I feel great. I'm 100,” he declared. Jackson did, however, note that his legs took a pounding the past two weeks in wins over San Francisco and the Bills.

“When I'm on the edge I kind of avoid it all the time,” he said. “But when I'm in the pocket trying to complete a throw, that's when nine times out of 10 they're going for my legs. It is what it is.”

He's not complaining.

“We're playing football. It's an aggressive game,” Jackson said. “They're trying to make a tackle and I'm trying to make them miss.”

2023 Pacific Games preparation on track

Pacific Games Council president Vidhya Lakan and chief executive officer Andrew Minogue visited Honiara last week to assess the state of preparations for the Solomon Islands 2023 Pacific Games.

During the visit, which ran from Dec. 2 to 7, meetings were held with the Prime Minister, the Hon. Manasseh Sogavare, the Solomon Islands Pacific Games Association Executive Board, as well as its full membership of national sports federations.

The PGC delegation also attended the fifth meeting of the 2023 Pacific Games National Hosting Authority, which is the umbrella organization responsible for delivering the 17th Pacific Games under the chairmanship of Dr. Jimmie Rodgers, the Secretary to the Prime Minister. An updated Games venues plan was presented and approved at the NHA meeting, which includes a new plan of support from the China.

The PGC also attended the groundbreaking ceremony for the Solomon Islands Sports & Leadership Institute, which



PACIFIC GAMES COUNCIL
Pacific Games Council president Vidhya Lakan, left, joins Solomon Islands Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare in the groundbreaking ceremony of the Solomon Islands Sports & Leadership Institute in Honiara last week.

SOUTHERN

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was courtesy of Marielle Gariguez, who found the back of the net just 38 seconds into the game.

Despite its early goals, Shirley's could not hang on to the lead at the break, as Julie Ann Capayas and Rizza Relucio countered for TanHoldings. Capayas broke the ice for TanHoldings in the 20th minute, while Relucio hit the equalizer two minutes later.

TanHoldings then managed to steal the lead, 3-2, thanks to Relucio's goal in the 27th minute. However, Zona saved the day for Shirley's with her

back-to-back goals in a span of three minutes.

Shirley's will dispute the Division B title with Southern United this Friday at 7pm.

While Shirley's labored its way to the title game, Southern United had an easier time advancing to the finals after dominating Kanoa.

Southern United opened a 7-1 lead in the first half and kept going in the second for the lopsided victory.

Nathanette Blas, Mariana Castro, and Keisha Deleon Guerrero teamed up in Southern United's first-half assault after drilling two goals apiece. Castro scored right in the

opening minute of the match and got her second in the 20th, while Blas posted her pair of goals in the sixth and 21st. Deleon Guerrero's two goals came in the 18th and 21st minute, while Tricia Roque also lit up the board in the first half (23rd minute) for Southern United. Kanoa's lone goal in the one-sided game was from Kiara Manganti, who found her target in the 16th minute.

Despite the big lead after the first half, Southern United showed no mercy to Kanoa in the second with Blas delivering a hat trick and Deleon Guerrero and Erin Frink adding one apiece.

a losing effort for CTSI.

Baby Ol'Aces 45, Lady Rollers 15

In the other women's division match last Monday, the Baby Ol'Aces coasted past the Lady Rollers.

The Baby Ol'Aces got its first victory after bowing to CTSI, 44-46, during the league's opening last Saturday.

The Baby Ol'Aces opened with a 25-8 halftime lead and never looked back to enter the win column. Angel Roligat logged 9 of her 11 points in the first half to help the Baby Ol'Aces control the game. Kina Rangamar also had a good start for the Baby Ol'Aces, adding 8 points in the opening half.

Then in the second half, it was Leani Acosta's turn to step up, as she recorded all her 8 points in the final 20 minutes of play for the Baby Ol'Aces' Scoring by halves: 25-7, 45-15.

30-point winning margin.

The Lady Rollers absorbed its second loss in as many games, as it had no players scoring in twin digits. Jeraldine Castillo led the Lady Rollers with her 7 markers.

First Game

Lady Ol'Aces 59—C. Camacho 14, Pangalinan 10, D. Camacho 9, Aldan 5, Simram 4, Santos 2, Deleon Guerrero 1.

CTSI 43—Pagaraao 15, Watanabe 15, Echavez 6, Espinosa 2, Alegre 2, Kautz 2.

Scoring by halves: 24-18, 59-43.

Second Game

Baby Ol'Aces 45—Rangamar 11, Roligat 11, Acosta 8, Camacho 6, Joyce 6, Ramarui 2.

Lady Rollers 15—Jeraldine Castillo 7, Jeralyn Castillo 6, Hemley 2.

Scoring by halves: 25-7, 45-15.

will be constructed over the next 10 months to provide a high-performance environment for Solomon Islands athletes in preparation for 2023 and beyond.

"The PGC is confident that Solomon Islands remains

on track to stage a successful Pacific Games in 2023. We are very grateful to Prime Minister Sogavare and his government for their continued support for the hosting of the 2023 Pacific Games, which will be a major

nation building event for Solomon Islands," Lakhan said.

"The PGC is also grateful for the pledges of support from donor governments in the region—China, Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, and Indonesia," the PGC president added. (PR)



English clubs march into Champions League

The English are on the march again in the Champions League.

Liverpool and Chelsea completed a sweep of Premier League clubs into the knockout stage of the Champions League on Tuesday, a season after England had two of its representatives in the final.

Liverpool, which beat Tottenham in the title match in June to become European champion for a sixth time, toughed out a 2-0 victory at Salzburg to advance as the winner of Group E and stay on course in its defense of the trophy.

It's shaping up to be a huge second half of the season for the Reds, who are also eight points clear in the Premier League in their pursuit of a first English championship in 30 years.

Chelsea was one of the teams to qualify from Group H after a 2-1 home victory over Lille under Frank Lampard, a Champions League winner with the London team in 2012 and in his first season as its manager.

Manchester City and Tottenham, the other English clubs competing in the Champions League, ad-

vanced last month with a game to spare.

It is the third straight season where England has provided four of the 16 representatives in the knockout stage, as teams in the lucrative Premier League start to show the benefit of having the biggest broadcasting revenues in soccer and some of the world's most highly rated coaches.

Napoli was one of four other teams to advance on Tuesday -- but it wasn't enough to keep Carlo Ancelotti in a job. He was fired by



Borussia Dortmund, Valencia and Lyon also reached the Last 16.

Arkadiusz Milik did his best to save Ancelotti, scoring a first-half hat trick for Napoli before Dries Mertens added the fourth against a Genk team which fielded Maarten Vandevoordt—the youngest goalkeeper ever in the competition at 17 years, nine months and 10 days.



Lille's Xeka, left, challenges for the ball with Chelsea's Mason Mount during the Champions League Group H soccer match at Stamford Bridge stadium in London ,Tuesday, Dec.10, 2019.

JSN

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earn a lopsided win.

OPEN DIVISION Hoopaholics 71, RNV 64

The Hoopaholics outclassed RNV after playing steadier in the fourth quarter.

With the match in a stand-off after three periods, 49-all, Maverick Itibus, Kelvin Fitial, Mel Manibusan, and Alex Lauron teamed up to hand the Hoopaholics the victory. Itibus posted all his 6 points in the final canto, Fitial added 5, while Lauron and Manibusan scored 4 apiece.

RNV, after keeping up with the Hoopaholics, in the first three quarters, fell short in the fourth, as only Tristan Cosino hit more than two field goals for the squad in the fourth frame.

Sunday Game

JSN 83—Tabora 30, Mungcal 14, Santos 10, Alegre 8, Tobias 7, Ocampo 6, Jarap 4, Gatdula 4.

Saipan Vegas 74—Bisana 20, Usi 14, Maplas 13, Cortez 10, Barreto 7, Zacke 5, Moises 4.

Scoring by quarters: 18-15, 41-36, 58-53, 83-74.

Saturday Games Masters

Saipar Pilots-HRP 68—Dela Cruz 12, Tolenito 11, Villarin 9, Puckly 9, Usi 8, Santos 8, Singca 8, Bush 4, Raha 1.

Gilas Batang 51—Tibayan 14, Poole 9, Jugos 9, Saures 5, De Jesus 5, Patawaran 2.

Scoring by quarters: 23-8, 45-20, 63-30, 68-51.

Open

Hoopaholics 71—Cadiang 17, Fitial 11, Augenbaugh 10, Lauron 8, Manibusan 8, Itibus 6, Cabrera 4, Babauta 3, Manibusan 2, Tenorio 2.

Vizion 64—Cosino 15, Ruedo 15, Odicita 10, Agustin 9, De Dios 8, Taraya 4.

Scoring by quarters: 14-14, 21-25, 49-49, 71-64.



Yanks land Cole in record \$324M, 9-year deal

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Saipan Tribune Sports

Heat use late 22-0 run to top Hawks in OT

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Lady Ol'Aces on top



By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The Lady Ol'Aces triumphed over CTSI, 59-43, in a possible finals preview in the women's division of the 2019 TanHoldings Christmas Basketball Tournament.



After winning their respective debuts in the tournament last weekend at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium, the Lady Ol'Aces and CTSI crossed paths early with the former showing who's the boss after earning a double-digit winning margin in their duel last Monday.

The Lady Ol'Aces pulled away in the second half after an 8-0 scoring run in the first four minutes of the final frame. Lia Rangamar, who delivered the first two baskets for the Lady Ol'Aces, also kicked off

the team's offense in the second half with a short jumper, while Jaime Pangelinan, Cassandra Camacho, and Eleina Santos hit the next three field goals to turn a 24-18 halftime lead to a 32-18 advantage.

A layup from Nanaka Wata-

nabe at the 15:50 mark gave CTSI its first basket in the second half, however, the losing squad failed to keep pace with the Lady Ol'Aces the rest of the way with its offense becoming too predictable. CTSI got most of its baskets from Watanabe, as Pagarrao, who finished the first half with 13 points, was held to 3 markers in the second half. Mikki Kautz and Madeleine Alegre also had a lackluster showing against the Lady Ol'Aces, registering only 2 points apiece in the second half, while Patricia Echaves was the only other

See LADY on Page 27



KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
JSN's Jun Tabora, center, takes a shot in front of Saipan Vegas' Cecilio Bisana, left, and Ernie Moises in the United Filipino Organization and IT&E 2019 Open and Master Basketball League last Sunday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Southern United, Shirley's reach finals

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Southern United Football Club and Shirley's Football Club set up their championship duel in

Division B of the 2019 Dove Women's Fall League after eliminating their respective

Dove Women's League playoff opponents last Friday at the TSL Sports Complex.

Southern United marched into the finals first after demolishing Kanoa Football Club, 12-1, while Shirley's earned the second ticket to the title match following a 4-3 upset against TanHoldings Football Club.

Heather Zona made a hat trick for Shirley's with her third and last conversion in the 43rd minute of the 50-minute game giving her team the go-ahead goal. Earlier in the 40th minute, Zona delivered the goal that knotted the count at 3-all, while her first shot came in the 15th minute, handing Shirley's the 2-0 lead. Shirley's other goal in the first half

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Saipan Southern United Football Club's Keisha Deleon Guerrero tries to control the ball, while a Kanoa Football Club defender moves closer on defense during their Division B in the 2019 Dove Women's Fall League last month at the TSL Sports Complex.

set the 10 points that Cecilio Bisana made for Saipan Vegas in the final canto. Santos had 8 of his 10 markers in the final canto that started with JSN ahead by only 5, 58-53.

Besides Santos and Tabora, Randy Mungcal also earned double figures with his 14 markers, while Bisana paced Saipan Vegas after posting 20 points.

Meanwhile, Saipan Pilots-HRP won its first game of the season after dominating Gilas Batang, 68-51, in the

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